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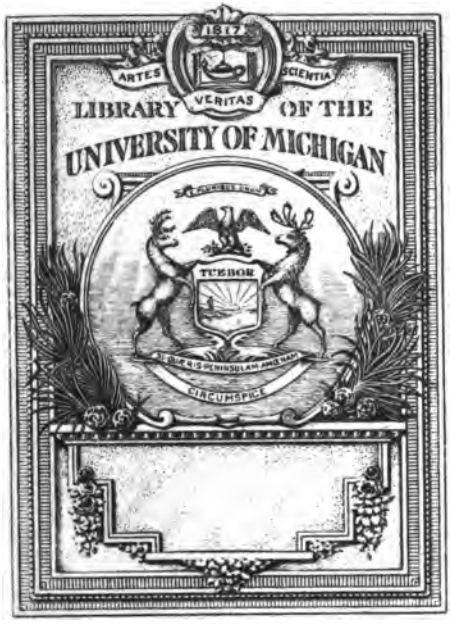
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A GENERAL

TREATISE

OF

MORALITY,

Form'd upon the PRINCIPLES of

Natural Reaſon only.

WITH

A Preface in Anſwer to two Eſſays lately publiſhed in the *Fable of the Bees.* And ſome incidental REMARKS upon an *Inquiry concerning Virtue,* by the Right Honourable *Anthony* Earl of *Shaftsbury.*

By RICHARD FIDDES, D. D.
Chaplain to the Right Honourable the Earl of *Oxford* and Earl *Mortimer.*

LONDON:
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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

Earl of *Pembroke*, &c.

Knight of the moſt noble Order of the GARTER, *&c.*

My LORD,

IN the Addreſs, wherewith I have the Honour to come before your Lordſhip, I ſhall not obſerve

the uſual Forms on the like Occaſions; but confine my ſelf to the ſubject Matter of the following Treatiſe. All the Topicks, indeed, which are proper to exhibit the *Idea* of a great Man, have been already employed by the fineſt Pens of the Age, in this Method of doing Homage to your Lordſhip, as the known Patron of Learning in general. And I ſhall not pretend to copy after ſo many of the beſt Maſters, native and foreign. I was principally induced to Requeſt, with all Humility, your

your Lordſhip's Patronage of this Work, from the Nature and Deſign of it. For no Principles, or Rules of any Kind, ever operate with ſo great Force, as when we confirm, and illuſtrate them by living Examples, eſpecially, from very high, and conſpicuous Stations; or where moſt, if not all, the great Offices in civil Life have been ſucceſſively ſuſtained with a juſt, but eaſy, Dignity. For ſuch Inſtances ſhew, in the beſt Light, that the Maxims of Morality, which are ſo reaſonable,

and

and beautiful in the *Theory*, are alſo, in Fact, truly adapted to the preſent State, and Condition of human Nature. Nothing, under ſuch mighty Advantages, can contribute, to render the Influence of moral Virtue, more powerful and diffuſive; unleſs here we ſee the Authority, the Wiſdom, and Experience of Age, conſiſtent, ſo far as they can be conceived to conſiſt, with all the Vivacity, the Goodneſs, and Complacency of Youth.

My

DEDICATION.

My LORD,

I ſhall add Nothing more, concerning the Motives to this Addreſs; but that I was ambitious of acknowledging, on ſo proper an Occaſion, a late Inſtance of your Lordſhip's Generoſity, in preventing my Application, for one of the greateſt, and moſt deſireable Favours, for which I could have been inclined to apply.

DEDICATION.

I am, with all possible Regard,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's

most humble,

and most dutiful

Servant,

RICH. FIDES.

THE

THE

PREFACE.

1. *MY Deſign, in the following Treatiſe, is to eſtabliſh the great Truths of Morality upon their proper and natural Principles. I have therefore conſidered them, without drawing any Proofs in the Pro-*

ſecution of my Subject, from di-vine Revelation. *For tho' ſeveral Paſſages are occaſionally cited by me from the Holy Scriptures; yet they are not propoſed, as having the Sanction of divine Authority, but only, as conveying to the Mind certain natural Truths, relating to Morality, in a better Light, and expreſſing them with a peculiar, and more irreſiſtible Force.*

2. *I was principally induced to undertake this Work, upon the two following Motives: A Deſire of obviating ſuch ill Effects, as might ariſe from the dangerous Tendency, if not the formed Deſign of ſeveral Pieces, that have been lately publiſhed towards ſubverting the very Principles of natural Religion: And a Proſpect, at the ſame*

ſame time, of ſupplying, in ſome meaſure, what has been reckoned among the things, that are wanting, a general Treatiſe of Morality in the Engliſh *Tongue.*

For tho' we abound with great Variety of practical Diſcourſes, and many of them very excellent as to particular moral Subjects; yet I do not know one Engliſh *Writer, who has undertaken to ſtate the Principles of Morality in one entire Syſtem from natural Reaſon only, or to reſolve them into their diſtinct and proper Grounds.*

3. *None of the ancient Moraliſts have treated this Subject in it's due extent, or after a manner, wherein there is nothing defective.* Cicero, *in his admirable Book of*

Offices, has gone farther than moſt, if not than any of them, towards eſtabliſhing moral Duties, upon the natural Aptitude, Beauty, and Decency of them. He was a Lover of moral Truth, and had devoted himſelf much to her Service; but he did not follow her to the Place of her Habitation. He ſought her every where upon Earth, in ſolitary Life, in private Families, and in the publick Adminiſtration of Affairs; but ſhe is only to be found in Heaven; and by contemplating, there, the moral Perfections of the divine Nature, the Rule and Model *of Perfection to all other intelligent Beings.*

4. *I cannot ſay, that Chriſtian Writers themſelves have generally improved this Method of Reaſoning*

soning so far, as might have been expected from the Lights, which revealed Religion has afforded to them. But some of them have sufficiently demonstrated, to what excellent Use it may be employed, towards serving the Cause of Morality; and, in particular, the celebrated Author of the Search after Truth; *who has proposed this Argument, to all the Advantage, that human Wit, animated with the most lively Sentiments of Piety, could be supposed capable of giving to it. That admirable Writer, in all his Works, has established this Argument upon such clear and strong Foundations, suited to the beautiful and magnificent Structure, he hath raised, as if he designed to build for Eternity.*

His

His Books for the Advancement of uſeful Knowledge have been rendered in Engliſh: *But whether it be, that the* Engliſh *Soil is not of itſelf ſufficiently adapted, or as yet generally prepared for the Culture of ſo refined a Philoſophy, it has not yet taken Root, or ſpread itſelf, in proportion to thoſe fruitful and generous Principles, wherewith it is every where replete: Even his excellent Treatiſe of Morality is but in few Hands, and among thoſe, the Value of it is ſometimes much better known by the Name of the Author, than by a proper Uſe of the Book. There is, indeed, ſomething in it, ſo far out of the common Way of Thinking, and his Method of aſcertaining the Truths of Morality is ſo different from that in*

uſe

aſe among our beſt Writers upon moral or theological Subjects, that, it has not been without Oppoſition, his Works have found here that favourable Reception, they are now thought to deſerve. So great is the Force of Prejudice, even with pious, learned, and good Men, againſt a different way of philoſophiſing, tho upon the moſt ſolid Principles, from what they have been accuſtomed to, that I remember a great Prelate, eminent in all theſe Characters, who made it an Objection againſt one of the greateſt metaphyſical Wits, this Nation produced in the late Age, that he affected to imitate Monſieur Malebranch. *This which was ſpoken by way of Reproach to Mr.* Norris, *himſelf thought his greateſt Glory. But all the Diſcoveries he made*

in the Ideal World, whether reſpecting ſpeculative Truths, or ſuch as are more influential on the Duties of moral Life, did not meet either with the Reception, or the Reward, that was due to his Merit.

6. *Tho' poſſibly there may be, among other abſtract Sciences, a more general Diſpoſition for* Metaphyſicks *at preſent, than formerly diſcovered itſelf, yet they are not ſo far encouraged or introduced, as to give a Writer, who ſhall form his Reaſonings wholly upon them, any great Hopes of Succeſs: I have therefore endeavoured in the following Treatiſe, ſo much as poſſible, to avoid them, and the Uſe of all nice and intricate Diſtinctions; tho' a Work of this Nature muſt be*

be very imperfect, or rather wholly deficient, as to the principal Deſign of it, wherein no metaphyſical Arguments are employed. But to adapt myſelf more to the common Taſt and Capacity, and to prevent the ſtrong Impreſſions which are not eaſily reſiſted, or ſuddainly effaced, by thoſe, who read the Treatiſe of Morality above referred to, with any Degree of Attention, I have declined in proſecuting my preſent Subject, to look into it; not that I ſhould be aſhamed of copying after ſo very great a Maſter; but becauſe there is ſo much Beauty, as well as Strength and Energy in every thing he has written, that it is extremely difficult to conſult him, even where he is moſt abſtract and metaphyſical, without tranſcribing from him.

I have, therefore, wholly depended on my Memory, ſo far as I am, on any account, indebted to a Book, *which, if all other human Compoſitions, in the World, upon the Subject of Morality, were loſt, is full of ſuch rich Treaſures of Learning and Knowledge, upon that Subject, as might afford an ample Supply towards repairing the Loſs of them.*

7. *In reference to ſuch Objections, which incidentally occurred to my Thoughts, in proſecuting any of the following Arguments, I have endeavoured to anſwer them, as ſuccinctly, as the Nature of them would admit, without entring into perſonal Controverſy, where that could be avoided, eſpecially, with any modern Writers. But a Book having been lately*

lately publiſhed, wherein the Author directly attacks the moral Diſtinction of Good and Evil, ſometimes in a humorous, then in a more grave argumentative way, and often with an Air of Triumph; And that Book, having, it is ſaid, had a pretty brisk Circulation; which is not improbable, from the looſe Principles diſſeminated in it, and the free, eaſy, and lively Manner of the Author; I thought myſelf concerned to examine his Reaſonings (for I meddle not with his Decorations) particularly, and apart, from the Body of my Book, where the Diſcuſſion of them would not have ſuited ſo well with the proper Deſign and Plan of it. I propoſed therefore to do it by way of Preface, and eſpecially to the End, that the Prejudices which

might have been imbibed from that Performance againſt a Work, upon the following Subject being removed, the Reader, if inclined to go along with me, might find the Way more open and eaſy.

8. *I ſhall only beg Leave occaſionally to make a previous Reflection concerning the inſecure Grounds, upon which not only profeſſed Atheiſts, but even they, who believe the Exiſtence of a God, would totally deſtroy, if they were able, the common Principles of Morality.*

1. *In reſpect to Atheiſts. The Arguments whereby we prove the Being of a God are ſo obvious and cogent, that few Perſons are able to ſuppreſs or reſiſt the Force of them. There are, indeed, Men who*

who ſay in their Hearts, there is no God, that is, whoſe Impieties cauſe them ſecretly to wiſh, there may be no God; but, perhaps, no Man would ever totally, and at all times, extirpate this fundamental Article of Religion out of his Mind? Tho it may be queſtioned, upon the Principles of Atheiſm itſelf, and on Suppoſition, God really ſhould not exiſt, whether therefore wicked Men could be ſecure, there is no future State. For ſince the Operations of the Mind cannot be conceived to ariſe from the Conſtruction of the groſſer Parts of the Body, it will be impoſſible for the Atheiſt to ſhew that the Mind cannot operate, when in a ſeperate State from the Body. If Thought be only a Reſult, according to the atheiſtical Hypotheſis of the more

pure,

pure, ſubtle, and active Parts of Matter, why may not the Soul ſubſiſt and act in ſome proper Vehicle, when the groſſer Parts and Mechaniſm of the Body, to which it is now united, ſhall be diſſolved? It is much more probable, that a collection of blind and inſenſate Atoms once formed into a thinking Syſtem, ſhould be able to continue or maintain itſelf in that ſtate, than that it ſhould at firſt have fallen regularly into it. And if the thinking Syſtem in an Atheiſt, ſhall ſubſiſt after the Death of the Body, and he can never know, upon his own Principles, that it ſhall not; then, inſtead of appearing in Judgment hereafter before a righteous and good God, he could have no aſſurance, that he ſhould not be expoſed to the implacable Rage, Malice,

Malice, and Cruelty of other Spirits more wicked, *and powerful than himſelf. For why ſhould this World, we now inhabit, which bears very litle Proportion to the whole Maſs of Matter every where extended, beyond what the Eye, or even Imagination can reach, yet be thought the only Scene of Action for Beings endowed with Intelligence? Why ſhould not a fortuitous Concourſe of Atoms, if Intelligence muſt be aſcribed to ſo chimerical a Cauſe, have produced in an infinite Succeſſion of Ages, and an infinite Variety of Worlds, other Intelligences, beſides thoſe, which inhabit this terraqueous Globe?*

Wicked Men, therefore, if they will argue conſiſtently from their own

own Scheme, that all Thought proceeds from a certain accidental Combination of the Parts of Matter, can take no Refuge in Atheiſm, againſt the Apprehenſions of future Exiſtence or Miſery.

2. *Others, therefore, have endeavoured to find that ſecurity in gratifying their Inclinations and Paſſions, which they were ſenſible could not be found in Atheiſm, by perſuading themſelves, that there is no real Diſtinction between Virtue and Vice, and that theſe are only different Names, which Mankind have arbitrarily agreed to give to Things.*

3. *This being an Opinion, equally pernicious, if not more ſo, to the Cauſe of Morality than Atheiſm,*

Atheiſm (ſuppoſing Men in a mere State of Nature) I think it incumbent on me, to examine ſome of the moſt ſpecious Arguments, whereby it has been ſupported; and particularly by the modern Author referred to above, in two diſtinct Treatiſes, one intitled, An Inquiry into the Origin of Moral Vertue; *the other,* A Search into the Nature of Society.

In the former, he aſſerts that Lawgivers *have found it adviſeable to recommend Self-denial and Publick-ſpiritedneſs to Men, as neceſſary to the Ends of Civil Society. But becauſe this was a Sacrifice, which would not eaſily be made, without ſome Equivalent; and they obſerved the predominant Paſſion of Man was a*

him, not to direct, but only to reproach and condemn him; to ſhew him his Miſery, and his Defects.

Now where ſeveral Motives may be reaſonably aſſigned for any Action, it is more human, more juſt, and equitable, to aſcribe it to the beſt Motives; at leaſt it is highly injurious to human Nature, and againſt all the Rules of common Ingenuity, wholly to exclude *the beſt Motives.*

And therefore all this Gentleman has ſaid, concerning the Power of Flattery, may be allowed to him, without any Conſequence to his Argument: It not being the Queſtion, Whether ſome of the moſt celebrated Actions of Men, have not been owing to Vanity;

nity; but whether Men may not be excited to do great and truly good Actions from a pure Motive of Virtue, or ſuch a laudable Deſire of Fame, which may very well conſiſt with a Virtuous Principle?

Neither is it denied, that Politicians, may, by a wiſe Management, make Uſe of the very Errors and Defects of human Nature to ſerve the Ends, in many Caſes, of Civil Government; but becauſe a good Uſe may be accidentally made by an artful Application of ill Inſtruments, will it therefore follow, that no proper Inſtruments could be found or employed to the ſame Uſe?

The Author, in this Caſe, ought to have diſtinguiſhed between the natural Tendency, and the occaſional

ſional Application of Things: A Deſire of doing good and generous Actions, is of itſelf a proper and reaſonable Motive to ſuch Actions; neither does it leſſen the Merit of them that they are attended both with an inward Complacency of Mind, and a certain Degree of external Reputation; becauſe theſe Motives are in the Nature of them proper to Influence a reaſonable Agent: tho' it may accidentally happen, vitious and indirect Motives from Pride or Flattery, may alſo excite other Perſons to do the like Actions. It is therefore an Inſtance by no means concluſive, which is made uſe of, from a Saying of Alexander, *the* Macedonian Madman, *if ſo harſh an Expreſſion can be allowed in one who appears ſo well to underſtand the Rules of polite Writings,*

Writing, that Praiſe is the only End of human Actions: If it were ſo to Alexander, *there may yet be heroick Minds, who form and execute great Deſigns upon* true *Motives of publick Good; tho' it is not neceſſary thoſe of a laudable Ambition ſhould be excluded. Yet the Definition he makes of Glory from this ſingle Inſtance, according to the Generality of the Terms whereby He expreſſeth it, is irreſpective and abſolute.* "*To* "*define then the Reward of Glory* "*in the ampleſt Manner, the* "*moſt that can be ſaid of it is,* "*that it conſiſts in the ſuperlative* "*Felicity which a Man, who is* "*conſcious of having performed* "*a noble Action, enjoys in Self-*"*love, while he is thinking on* "*the Applauſe he expects from* "*others.* *

* Pag. 41.

It

It is contrary to all the Rules of juſt Reaſoning to infer general Propoſitions, or Rules, from particular Inſtances; but were this really allowable, the Author was very unhappy in chuſing, to uſe his own Dialect, a Madman *for his Inſtance. As we ought not to flatter human Nature, neither are we obliged to villify and diſgrace it. And if Examples may be applied, to ſhew, what the human Qualities are, they ſhould rather be borrowed from the moſt perfect and improved, than from the irregular or depraved State of Mankind.*

And to do the Author juſtice, indeed, he confeſſeth afterwards, "*That among the Heathens there* "*have been Men, who when*

"*they*

" *they did good to others, were*
" *ſo far from ſeeking Thanks*
" *and Applauſe, that they took*
" *all imaginable Care to be for*
" *ever concealed from thoſe on*
" *whom they beſtowed their Be-*
" *neſits; and conſequently* it may
" be argued, *that Pride has no*
" *hand in ſpurring Man on to the*
" *higheſt Pitch of Self-denial.*"

But even in ſuch extraordinary Caſes, which are confeſſed to be very rare He *is of Opinion no ſmall Inſtances of Pride may be diſcovered, from the ſenſible Pleaſure that proceeds from virtuous Actions;* " *which Pleaſure,*
" *together with the Occaſion of*
" *it, are as certain Signs of*
" *Pride, as looking pale and trem-*
" *bling at any imminent Danger,*
" *are the Symptoms of Fear.*

Pride, *as uſed by him in this Place, is an equivocal Term. If we underſtand by it, a natural Conſciouſneſs of Worth in a Man, ariſing from a Senſe of his having acted according to the Order and Perfection of his Nature, there is nothing criminal or irregular in ſuch a Principle. It is, in this Senſe, ſo far from being an Objection againſt the natural and intrinſick Reaſons, upon which we found moral Virtue; that it is a direct Proof* of *moral Virtue; as ſuppoſing it to operate naturally in us, if we might not ſay* mechanically, *like the common Paſſions of Fear or Shame.*

But if by Pride *be meant an unjuſt or flattering Opinion, which a Man has, above what he ought*

to

to have, of his own Abilities or Actions, this we grant to be highly irregular; but aſſert, at the ſame time, there is no Neceſſity why a wiſe or a good Man ſhould be ſubject to this Irregularity; and conſequently, why Pride, except as commonly underſtood, and as it ſeems to be taken by this Author, in the worſt Senſe, ſhould be an inſeparable Motive to human Actions.

Montaign, *who perhaps underſtood the weak and corrupt Side of human Nature, as well as the Author before me; yet had Thoughts, in general, much leſs derogatory to the Dignity and Honour of it. He ſuppoſes tho' Men often act from indirect, yet they* may *act, upon generous and good Principles.* I have obſerved, ſaith

he, *ſpeaking concerning the Hiſtory of* Guiciardine, among ſo many Events and Counſels, about which he gives his Judgment, he never aſcribes any to Virtue, Religion, or Conſcience; as if thoſe Things were wholly baniſhed out of the World: And he imputes all Actions, tho' never ſo fine, to a vicious Principle of Self-intereſt. It is *impious* to believe, that among ſuch a vaſt Number of Actions, none ſhould have been produced by a reaſonable Motive: Men will never be ſo generally corrupt, but ſome will avoid the Contagion; which giveth me a Suſpicion, that *Guiciardine* had a vicious Taſt, and that he judged of others by *himſelf*.

This Writer's Apology, leſt his Notions, concerning the Origin

gin of moral Virtue, ſhould be thought offenſive to Chriſtianity, is not very intelligible and is withall imperfect. The Offence, which Chriſtians may take at his Notions, is not to be conſidered merely in Reſpect to them as *Chriſtians; but, as the Religion they profeſs, ſuppoſes the Truth of natural Religion, a Law written on the Hearts of Men, accuſing, or elſe excuſing them, according to the good or ill Uſe they make of their Liberty. The poſitive Laws, in the Goſpel, the Laws peculiar to Chriſtianity, are few in Compariſon. But if there be no real Diſtinction of moral Virtue, Chriſtianity is as much the Law of Ordinances, as that given by* Moſes *to the* Jews; *and the Excellency, therefore of it will not lie in this, that it has aboliſhed the*

the ceremonial Law, but that it has inſtituted a Religion conſiſting of fewer Ceremonies: For all Laws, that depend upon the mutable Nature of Things, are of equal Excellency, and only oblige by Virtue of their being commanded. His Apology therefore had been more full and adequate to the Offence taken, if he had endeavoured to ſhew, that no Prejudice could be done or deſigned, from any thing he had ſaid, to the Cauſe of natural *Religion.*

Moral Virtue, and Chriſtianity conſidered as a Rule of Life, are the ſame Thing. We may therefore ſuppoſe Morality truly deſigned by God as a Means of much phyſical Good, without intereſting Chriſtianity in the Queſtion.

II. *This*

11. *This Author, in his* Search into the Nature of Society, *ſets himſelf directly to oppugn and overthrow a contrary Opinion of a* noble Writer, *much read as he obſerves, by Men of* Senſe. *According to that Opinion, Men without any great Trouble or Violence to themſelves, may be* really *virtuous; Virtue and Vice are permanent Realities, that muſt ever be the ſame in all Countries, and in all Ages; and a Man of ſound Underſtanding may not only find out the* Beautiful *and the* Honeſt, *both in Morality and the Works of Nature and Art, but likewiſe govern himſelf, by his Reaſon, with as much Eaſe and Readineſs, as a good Rider manages a well taught Horſe by the Bridle.*

In

In Anſwer to this the Author of the Search *propoſes to diſcuſs, Whether there be a real Worth and Excellency in Things, a Preheminence of one Thing above another, which every Body will always agree to, that well underſtands them? The Negative is what he propoſes to maintain. But before I proceed to examine his Arguments, it may not be improper to cite the Author of the* Characteriſticks *upon the Subject of Moral Virtue, in his own Words; not only, as he hath aſſerted the immutable Diſtinction of Moral Good and Evil, in the ſtrongeſt Terms, but hath alſo in his* Inquiry concerning Virtue, *employed ſome very pertinent and beautiful Illuſtrations in Proof of it.* The Caſe is the ſame, *ſaith he,*

he, ſpeaking concerning the Objects of human Affection, in the mental or moral Subjects, as in the ordinary Bodies, or the common Subjects of Senſe; the Shapes, Motions, Colour, and Proportions of theſe latter, being preſented to our Eye, there neceſſarily reſults a Beauty or Deformity, according to the different Meaſure, Arrangement, and Diſpoſition of their ſeveral Parts; ſo in Behaviour and Actions, when preſented to the Underſtanding, there muſt be found, of *Neceſſity,* an apparent Difference, according to the Regularity, or Irregularity of the Subjects. *The* Roman *Orator, as I have cited him in the following Treatiſe, hath made Uſe of this very Argument, with ſome Difference in the Expreſſion; but there is no Neceſſity of ſuppoſing*

this noble *Author had borrowed from him: An Invention leſs fertile, than that of the late Earl of* Shaftsbury, *might eaſily have embelliſhed an Argument, with the ſame* Images, *which would naturally ariſe to an attentive Mind, on the ſame Subject.*

But, in what follows, we may ſay this noble Writer has improved his Illuſtration of moral Virtue from ſenſible Objects, beyond the Roman *Orator himſelf. I ſhall only take the Liberty of tranſcribing from him the following Paragraph; tho' it is followed by others, which will be no leſs acceptable to thoſe, who will conſult the Original.*

" The Mind, which is Spec-
" tator, or Auditor, of other
" Minds,

" *Minds, cannot be without it's*
" *Eye and Ear, ſo as to diſcern*
" *Proportion, diſtinguiſh Sound,*
" *and ſcan each Sentiment, or*
" *Thought, which comes before*
" *it. It can let nothing eſcape it's*
" *Cenſure; it feels the ſoft, and*
" *harſh, the agreeable, or diſ-*
" *agreeable, in the Affections;*
" *and finds a* foul *and* fair, *a*
" *harmonious and a diſſonant, as*
" *really and truly here, as in*
" *any muſical Numbers, or in the*
" *outward Forms and Repreſen-*
" *tations of ſenſible Things: Nor*
" *can it withold its Admiration,*
" *or Extaſy, its Averſion and*
" *Scorn, any more in what re-*
" *lates to one, than to the other*
" *of theſe Subjects. So that to*
" *deny the common and natural*
" *Senſe of the* ſublime *and* beau-
" tiful *in Things, will appear an*

" *Affectation meerly to any one,* " *who conſiders duly of this Af-* " *fair.*" *And,* * *in another Place, he ſpeaks of the eternal Meaſures, and immutable independent Nature of* Worth *and* Virtue.

I ſhall not be thought, by doing this Juſtice to a free Writer, upon a Subject where he has ſaid many fine and juſt Things, to approve, in general, all the Eſſays of his Wit and Humour; wherein there are ſome Things not to be examined too nicely by the Rules either of ſtrict Reaſoning, or Piety. But this ought not to detract from the Praiſes due to him upon a Subject, where his Principles, that are good and well ſupported, have been unjuſtly attacked. Some Allowances may

* Pag. 36.

be

be made to his Errors, on Account of his Age, and more perhaps of the early Impreſſions owing to his Birth, or Education: Impreſſions of which Kind are not eaſily effaced by thoſe, who yet have naturally the beſt Diſpoſitions, and the ſtrongeſt Minds. Theſe Circumſtances conſidered, with the Temptations in a great Fortune to Eaſe, Luxury, and Pleaſure, and the Reluctancy that is found in every State of Life to ſpeculative Inquiries, and the Labour of the Mind; to which may be added the looſe Morality, which has been of late induſtriouſly propagated by Perſons of ſome Diſtinction in the World: it is more ſurpriſing, that a young *Nobleman ſhould have publiſhed ſo many Tracts, ſo* generally *read by Men of Senſe, than that there ſhould be ſo few*

Errors

Errors found in them, and thoſe of much leſs dangerous Conſequence, than have been ſo often publiſhed in our weekly Papers, without any publick *Cenſure. The Author of the* Search *may think, that Diſquiſitions of this Kind are an Argument of an unactive Wit; yet, with others, to ſee a Perſon, in the Flower and Strength of Life, deſpiſe the common Entertainments, Pleaſures and gay Follies of that Age, in an ample Fortune, to attend the Culture and Improvement of his Underſtanding, and to ſerve the Cauſe of Virtue, by Study and Contemplation, is rather an Argument of a prudent Choice, and a* great *Mind, than of an indolent Temper. Not that a Man of Honour, or Spirit, ought to decline ſerving his Country,*

try, when he is qualified and called to the Service of it: but upon a general Conſideration, an ingenious Improvement of a young Nobleman in Retirement and Contemplation, is certainly much preferable to an active *and* boiſterous *Stupidity, in the higheſt Stations of publick Life.*

But to examine the Arguments, employed by the Author of the Search *to deſtroy the Notions in the* Characteriſticks, *which yet he owns are generous and refined; I ſhall ſummarily endeavour to propoſe them in the beſt Light, and with all the Force I can, and, where I am not obliged to contract them, in his own Words.* "*There are,* ſaith he, "*different Faults, as well as* "*Beauties, that, as Modes and*

"*Faſhions*

" *Faſhions alter, and Men vary*
" *in their Taſts and Humours,*
" *will be differently admired or*
" *diſapproved.*"

All the Conſequence, which can be drawn from this Argument, is, that in Things of their own Nature arbitrary, *or indifferent, ſuch as thoſe, which relate to Modes or Faſhions, the Reaſons of our Approbation or Diſlike, of our uſing or diſcontinuing the Uſe of them, are mutable, according to the different Time, Place, or Diſpoſition, wherein we may be. To urge this, therefore, as an Argument againſt ſuch Things, as are ſaid by us to be founded on natural and immutable Reaſons, is to beg the Queſtion, and to argue againſt that, which has not been aſſerted or denied.*

And

And therefore the following Inſtance from the different Judgment of Painters, *as to the Works of eminent Maſters, is equally improper: This, according to his own Account, not depending ſo much on their intrinſick Worth, as their Antiquity, or ſome relative Character, (by Reaſon of which Uſe has given a current Value to them) can be no juſt Illuſtration of his Argument; but rather, indeed, proves the intrinſick Difference of Virtue and Vice: For, he owns, Judges will never diſagree in Opinion, when a fine Picture is compared to the Dawbing of a Novice. But why not diſagree in this Caſe, as well as in the other? But only, becauſe the Difference lies here, as it does between Virtue and Vice, in*

a real *Diſſimilitude or Inequality. In the other Caſe, the Difference may be only accidental and imaginary; the ſeveral Pieces being done, perhaps, by Hands equally maſterly, and according to the ſame Rules of Art. And this Author himſelf is obliged to confeſs, that this Difference among the Pieces, done by great Maſters, is from Conſiderations altogether foreign to their Art; their different Names, the Time of their Age, the Scarcity of their Works, and ſometimes the Quality of Perſons, in whoſe Poſſeſſion they are. A more improper Inſtance could not have been employed to overthrow a Diſtinction of Things, which does not depend on temporary, but on certain ſtated Reaſons; and where, in his own Words, there*

is

is a Standard to go by, that is always the ſame; if Reaſon, which I have proved in another Place to be the Rule of moral Virtue, is always the ſame; and if it be not, there is no certain Way of Reaſoning upon this, or upon any other Subject.

From the Works of Art, this Writer proceeds, with an equal Air of Aſſurance in his Argument, to thoſe of Nature; and obſerves, what is beautiful in one Country, is not ſo in another. If by Beauty *be meant a juſt Contexture and Proportion of Parts, Beauty is certainly, in the Nature of it, ſomething real, independent of common Opinion; and therefore not a proper Inſtance in the preſent Caſe; but tending rather to prove the independent Notion of moral Virtue*

or Order. If, on the other Hand, by Beauty be underſtood any Irregularity or Defect, any Affectation, or Artifice, which may be taken for real Beauty, this is all the Work of Imagination; and is of no more Force to deſtroy the real Diſtinction of Virtue, than it would be a Proof that there are no ſtated or juſt Rules of good Painting, becauſe an ignorant Perſon may compare the Dawbing of a Novice to a fine Picture. What he adds concerning the different Choice of Floriſts is not more pertinent, or concluſive: ſo far, as a Flower is larger in its Kind, of a more ſtrong, bright, or diverſified Colour, ſo far it has real Beauty, and is naturally more apt to pleaſe and delight the Eye. If a Flower much inferior in Colour or Shape is ſometimes more eſteemed;

ſteemed; this is not becauſe Men conſider it as more beautiful *or valuable in itſelf, but on Account of its Rarity, or becauſe, perhaps, it is the Product of Art, or ſome uſeful Experiment: So that even in this reſpect, there is a real Foundation for the Eſteem had for it, on Account of ſome relative Character, if not poſſibly alſo of ſome peculiar Uſe.*

There is no greater Difficulty, in accounting for the different Cuſtoms of Men, as to ſhaving *or wearing* a long Beard, *and other Circumſtances relating to their different Dreſs. Theſe are Modes purely arbitrary, except where they are reſpectively attended with ſome good Uſe, or Inconvenience; in regard to which Reaſon directs, all Modes whatever*

ever ſhould be regulated; and ſo far they have a real and intrinſick, and not meerly an imaginary Utility in them. It may be arbitrary to apply his own familiar Inſtance, in more temperate Countries, to uſe a narrow brim'd Hat; but the other Extream would certainly be leſs convenient, if ever it could obtain as the Faſhion, under the Torrid Zone. *Neither is the Queſtion moved by him, which is the handſomeſt* Mode *in being, to wear great Buttons, or ſmall ones, of any more Significancy, in the preſent Argument; there being no Standard in Nature, or by civil Appointment, to regulate the Proportion of them, as there is in all Things founded upon Reaſons of real Convenience and Order. And ſuch we ſay, and have proved,*

ved, are the Rules of moral Virtue. And if the Queſtion is to be examined by this Rule, it will not be ſo very difficult, but a mortal Man *may be able to decide it. For however arbitrary the Mode in general may be, as to the Size of the Button, yet if it be greater or leſs than is adapted to the particular Uſe, for which it is deſigned, it is certainly an irregular, and, therefore, unreaſonable Faſhion.*

The like Anſwer may be given to his Inſtance of laying out a Garden, which might be deſigned in great Variety of Plats; and every Proprietor of the Ground, is at Liberty to make his Choice of them; provided, Regard be had to the Quantity, Situation, and Boundaries of it; for otherwiſe

a Round *may neither be ſo commodious, nor ſo pleaſing to the Eye, as a Square. And when a Garden is actually laid out, in any Form, a Rule of Proportion and Correſpondency between the ſeveral Parts of it, like that, by Way of Analogy, in moral Subjects, ought neceſſarily to be obſerved; otherwiſe it is not to be computed, according to his own Calculation, among the almoſt innumerable Ways of laying out a Garden* judiciouſly. *The two remaining Exemplifications, which he uſes, are not more to his Purpoſe. The Building of Chriſtian Churches, in Form of a Croſs, is founded upon a religious Regard for that Sign, for Reaſons known to the Author, and which need not here be repeated: It is therefore no Argument, this Form ought*

ought not to be kept to by a Chriſtian Architect, in building a Church for the Uſe of Chriſtians, if he would not commit a great Fault; *tho'* Turks, *who are not concerned in thoſe Reaſons, or do not apprehend themſelves affected by them, build their Moſques after another Faſhion. The laſt of his Inſtances concerning Things of a more indifferent Nature, is from the Act for Burying in Woollen, to which People at the firſt were not eaſily reconciled, but, by Degrees, the Cuſtom of Burying in Woollen was introduced as a Matter of Decency. This ſhews, indeed, that our liking or diſliking any Thing, for which we have not a real Standard, very much depends on Mode or Cuſtom, but is as far from proving, as the reſt of his Inſtances, that virtuous Ac-*

tions, which are founded upon immutable Reaſons of Order and Perfection, have therefore no other Foundation but Mode *and* Cuſtom.

Now, tho' it might have ſerved as a general Anſwer to all theſe Inſtances, that if they relate to Objects of meer Humour or Fancy, they are of no Force; and if to real Beauty or Proportion, they conclude not againſt the Diſtinction of moral Virtue, but for it: Yet I was willing to deſcend to a ſpecifick Anſwer to the ſeveral Parts of this Author's Induction, leſt ſome of them might be thought to have more Weight, or to be propoſed in a better Light, and to more Advantage than the reſt; according to the different Taſte or Imagination of

of the Reader: To which I will not diſſemble, he is ſometimes happy enough in addreſſing himſelf.

But I am ſo far from deſigning to weaken his Arguments in any reſpect, that in order to a more clear Diſcovery of the Point in Queſtion, I ſhall endeavour to give them an additional Force, by making the following Conceſſion.

That a Cuſtom, for Inſtance, may be introduced, and publickly approved, not only concerning ſuch Caſes, as are propoſed by him, confeſſedly in their own Nature arbitrary and indifferent; but concerning Things, that muſt be acknowledged to have ſome real Inconvenience and Irregularity in them.

I ſhall ſuppoſe, that in a certain Nation, or in a Tract of Land, not very remote, conſiſting of ſeveral *Nations, hard drinking, ſo as to diſturb the Powers, and Uſe of Reaſon, is thought no Crime. This comes much nearer to a Proof, that the Nature of moral Actions depends on Mode or Opinion, than the different Faſhion of ſhaving or wearing a long Beard, of a broad or narrow brimmed Hat; becauſe upon the Principles of thoſe, who contend for the innate Excellency or Turpitude of certain human Actions;* That *is excellent, which tends to the greater Perfection of human Nature, to the Improvement of Reaſon, and towards the promoting of Order. That, on the contrary, is morally unfit or evil,*

which

which tends to debaſe human Nature, and to confound, as Drunkenneſs does in particular, all Reaſon and Order. Shall we infer, then, from the Practice or Opinion, however general, of theſe Nations, that there is no real Diſorder or Immorality in Drunkenneſs? No; the only Conſequence we can draw from ſuch an Inſtance, is, that Men, thro' Ignorance, Stupidity, natural Temper, the Air they breathe, or other accidental Occaſions of Error, may believe there is no Crime in certain Things, of themſelves really criminal. It might, as juſtly, be argued, that becauſe the Generality of the World have been Polytheiſts and Idolaters, therefore, in the Reaſon of the Thing, there is no certain Proof of the Unity of God. When we ſpeak of the un-

unalterable Meaſures of moral Virtue, we ſuppoſe Men, indeed, reaſonable Beings; but we do not ſuppoſe them all equally reaſonable, either with reſpect to the Powers, or the Exerciſe of Reaſon.

It is ſufficient to eſtabliſh the Truth of Morality, that Men, in all Ages, have agreed in the general Notion of it. If they have been at any time divided in their Opinion concerning it, when they applied their general Notions of it to particular Subjects, ſo as to transfer the Name of Virtue to Vice, or of Vice to Virtue; this very Miſapplication ſuppoſes Virtue and Vice to be two Things really ſubſiſting and diſtinguiſhed; for what is not cannot be miſapplied. As Idolatry therefore proceeded from ſome erroneous Belief of the

one

one true God, and, when traced up to its original, rather ſuppoſed his Exiſtence, than a Plurality of Beings, that were by Nature no Gods; ſo the appropriating the Name of Virtue to certain Vices, does by no means tend to prove, that there is no ſuch thing in reality as Virtue; but only that Men are capable of miſtaking the Nature of Things, and of drawing falſe Conſequences from true Principles. This may be done through Ignorance; but, in moral Life, is very often the Effect of ſome irregular Inclination: For we more eaſily aſſent to thoſe Things without Scruple or Examination, the Truth of which we are willing to believe; to which may be added as one Reaſon, why immoral Practices are ſometimes openly introduced; that tho' Men really

really know, and confeſs them to be ſo, yet they look upon them as Sins in their Kind more venial; to which frail Nature is more ſubject; or which a merciful God, on Account, in their Opinion, of ſome particular alleviating Circumſtances that attend them, will not be extreme *in puniſhing.*

12. *His Conſequence, therefore,* that in Morals there is no greater Certainty, *than in theſe Inſtances, which are of a very different Conſideration from the Subjects of Morality, is, by no means, juſt or well deduced*; *Neither will what he urges further to confirm this Propoſition, from the Caſes of Polygamy and Inceſt, be of any Uſe to corroborate it. All that can be inferred from thoſe Caſes is, that the Prejudices imbibed in*

In-

Infancy, the Force of Cuſtom or Example, or, perhaps, ſome complexional Diſpoſition, may hinder Men from examining moral Subjects, in certain Inſtances, with that Attention and Impartiality, which are requiſite to the Diſcovery of Truth. How true a Foundation ſoever any moral Duty has, in the Reaſon of Things, it does not, therefore, follow, that all Men ſhall ſee thoſe Reaſons, in the ſame Light, or argue upon them after the ſame Manner; becauſe there are many accidental Occaſions, as hath been already confeſſed, of Ignorance or Error, it is very unbecoming a Philoſopher to conclude, there is nothing therefore, in the Nature of it, concerning which, we can have any true or certain Knowledge.

But beſides this general Anſwer to the Caſes of Poligamy, and Inceſt; which I propoſe to treat of diſtinctly, in another Place, it may here be curſorily obſerved, that the Subjects of Morality may be conſidered, as being either of primary, or, according as they have been diſtinguiſhed by ſome learned Men, of ſecondary Obligation: thoſe, under the firſt Diſtinction, ariſe from the immutable Reaſon and Order of Things, and do not depend even upon the Will of the ſupreme Legiſlator, but are founded in thoſe eternal and eſſential Perfections of his Nature, whereby his Will itſelf is regulalated; and which, in the natural Order of our Ideas, are therefore antecedent to his Will; ſuch Things as

as are not meerly good by Virtue of his Command, or of any Circumſtances, wherein Man may accidently be placed; but ſuch, as are commanded, becauſe they are abſolutely good, and, under all Circumſtances, in their own Nature. Thus it can never be a Virtue; in Man, who is a reaſonable Being, to be proud, as Pride imports an Opinion of himſelf, above what he ought to think; becauſe it is contrary to Reaſon; contrary, therefore, to the Nature of Man, as a reaſonable Being, that he ſhould be, on any Account, obliged to make a wrong Judgment: Neither can it be lawful for a Man, under any Circumſtances, not to love God; to caſt of his Dependency on God; to blaſpheme or oppoſe his Will; becauſe the Reaſons of loving God, of Dependance

on him, of Honour and Obedience to him, being eternal, and flowing from the eſſential Perfections of the divine Nature, are immutable, as the divine Nature.

But there are Duties, and ſuch particularly as have relation to Man, conſidered as a ſocial *Creature, which are to be regulated by the good and proper Ends of Society. The intrinſick Excellency therefore, or Turpitude, of which Things is always to be conſidered, as they are more ſubſervient, or prejudicial to thoſe Ends. Thus, ſuppoſing it neceſſary to the Propagation of Mankind, that Perſons ſhould marry, in the firſt Degrees of Conſanguinity, there would not appear to be any moral Turpitude, in ſuch Marriages; becauſe they would be agreeable to God's Deſign of multiplying human Race,*

Race, and of his endowing Man with natural Powers and proper Diſpoſitions, to that End. But, ſuppoſing the World conſiderably multiplied, and very great Inconveniencies to ariſe in Society, from a Toleration of ſuch Marriages, on Account of the indecent Commerce and Familiarities, which would be introduced among the neareſt Relations, if permitted to make Love, and indiſcriminately to marry; it is requiſite, in this Caſe, that proper Reſtraints ſhould be laid upon a Liberty, where the original Reaſons of permitting it no longer ſubſiſt; and the Abuſes whereof, it would be very difficult, if not morally impoſſible, to prevent. To which may be added other Reaſons of Convenience, relating to Society, from a viſible Means

of

of ſtrengthning the Intereſt, enlarging the Correſpondence, and cementing the Friendſhip of Families; and, eſpecially, of preſerving that regular, and due Subordination in the ſame Family; which would be altogether confounded, if Intermarriages were promiſcuouſly allowed in them.

It is not denied, theſe are Inconveniences, with which the Supreme Legiſlator, by Virtue of his Soveraign Power over the Rights and Laws of Society, may diſpenſe; but, it does not therefore follow, they may be diſpenſed with by any human Conſtitution; or, that they are in their own Nature of arbitrary Uſe, in any Nation; whether the Laws allow, or prohibit them: Such Laws as do allow them, are of themſelves void,

void, and of no effect. For God, who founded human Society, may model it as he pleaſes; yet no human Authority can aſſume a Power over any particular Society againſt that Order, which God has, in general, eſtabliſhed, for the Government of Mankind; except, poſſibly, where ſome great Convenience, by a Breach of ſuch Order, will more than over ballance the Conveniences, which would ariſe from obſerving it. As ſuppoſing all the Inhabitants of the Earth reduced to one Family, I will not aver, but it might then be lawful to take the ſame Method towards the Preſervation or Increaſe of Mankind, without any expreſs Revelation, that was taken originally, by the Children of Adam.

As to the Caſe of Polygamy, the ſame Anſwer may indifferently ſerve; only it does not appear, there were ever the ſame Reaſons for it, in order to the Multiplication of Mankind. Had more Women been originally created than Men, the like Neceſſity might have been alledged for the Practice of it, as being ſubſervient to the End of God, in creating Mankind to repleniſh the Earth; and, in that Caſe, perhaps, the Inconveniences to Society in allowing Poligamy, for ſometime, would not have been in equal Proportion to the Benefits, which might have ariſen from it: But when Mankind might otherwiſe be multiplied, in a Method moſt proper to promote the Happineſs of private Families,

and

and conſequently of larger Societies, by the Marriage of one Man to one Woman; when this was found moſt agreeable to all the proper Ends of the conjugal State the mutual Comfort and Satisfaction of the married Parties; the Care, Subſiſtence and Education of Children; the Peace and good Order of Families; the Reſtraint of a violent Paſſion; and the Prevention of thoſe Diſorders, which are apt to ariſe from too great an Indulgence of it; and, when no Advantages from Polygamy could ballance all theſe Inconveniencies from a Toleration of it, then the Law againſt Plurality of Wives became a Law, if not in the primary Senſe unalterable by the ſupreme Legiſlator, yet ſuch, as no human Authority could diſpenſe with, or re-

peal; except in ſuch Caſes, which probably never happened, or will happen, when it might be more convenient, in reſpect to the general Good of Society, in all theſe Reſpects, or in moſt of them, that Polygamy ſhould be permitted, than that it ſhould be reſtrained.

Beſides theſe Arguments to ſhew, that Polygamy is a Breach of the moral Law, another may be taken from the Intention of God, ſo far as we can make a Judgment of it, from a very ſignal Inſtance of his Providence. For if we can be under a moral Obligation on any Account, we are indiſputably obliged to conform, ſo far as we are capable, to the Order and Deſign of God, when, by any Means, or proper Indication of his Will, he may think fit to diſcover them to us. Now

Now Experience ſhews, that there is, commonly, an equal Proportion in Number, between the two Sexes; and that, if there be any Diſparity, it is ſo inconſiderable, as not to make a ſenſible Alteration in the Caſe; or to give the leaſt occaſion of contending for a Plurality of Wives. If we conſider this admirable Effect of Providence, it appears to be a plain Direction to us, that as there are not viſibly more Women than Men, and that Marriage is the proper Means of preſerving the Succeſſion of Human Race, ſo one Man ought only to contract Marriage with one Woman; otherwiſe, a great Part of Mankind might be excluded, againſt their Conſent, from the Means of contributing towards

the Support or Encreaſe of it; and, conſequently, of anſwering one conſiderable End of their Creation. Plurality of Wives, therefore, is inconſiſtent with that Order of Nature, which Providence has mark'd out to us, and from which we cannot depart, without opening a Door to that unbridled Licentiouſneſs, and thoſe abominable Crimes, which are practiſed without Shame or Remorſe, wherever Polygamy is tolerated.

And now I appeal to the Judgment of the Reader, whether the Author had good Reaſons for the following Paſſage; or whether he has not given too juſt and great Occaſion of Offence by it?

"In

" *In Morals there is no greater*
" *Certainty. Plurality of Wives*
" *is odious among Chriſtians; and*
" *all the Wit and Learning of a*
" *great Genius, in Defence of it,*
" *has been rejected with Con-*
" *tempt. But Polygamy is not*
" *ſhocking to a Mahometan. What*
" *Men have learned from their*
" *Infancy enſlaves them, and the*
" *Force of Cuſtom warps Na-*
" *ture; and, at the ſame time,*
" *imitates her in ſuch a Manner,*
" *that it is often difficult to know*
" *by which of the two we are*
" *influenced. In the* Eaſt, *for-*
" *merly, Siſters married Bro-*
" *thers, and it was meritorious*
" *for a Man to marry his Mo-*
" *ther: Such Alliances are abo-*
" *minable; but it is certain, that*
" *whatever Horror we conceive*

" *at*

" *at the Thoughts of them, there* " *is nothing in Nature repugnant* " *againſt them, but what is built* " *upon* Mode *and* Cuſtom.

Convenience, with reſpect to many Good and Salutary *Ends of Society, and a Conformity to the Will and Deſign of God, in the Order he has appointed towards attaining thoſe Ends, certainly import, if Words have not quite loſt their ordinary Signification, ſomething more than the Effects of mere* Mode *and* Cuſtom. *So that ſhould there really be no moral Turpitude in ſuch Marriages; yet it ought not, in reſpect of thoſe Reaſons, to be ſaid,* " *That there is nothing* " *in Nature repugnant to them,* " *but what is built* upon Mode " *and* Cuſtom.

13. *The Sum of what I have ſaid, is, that the Laws of Communication between Men conſidered as Members of Society, being eſtabliſhed by God, he has a Right, as Soveraign Legiſlator, and in whom all Power and Propriety is veſted, to alter thoſe Laws, or to diſpenſe with them at Pleaſure; provided he do nothing which may render the Condition of Men, upon the whole Matter, more miſerable, than if they had never been; thus, by a ſpecial Command, God may authorize a Father to Sacrifice his Son, or one Nation to deſtroy or ſpoil another, without any prævious Cauſe or Declaration of War: But it is contrary to moral Obligation, becauſe contrary to the good and beneficial Ends God had*

in

in eſtabliſhing Society, that any human Government ſhould aſſume ſuch an arbitrary Power. And therefore Actions of this Nature, tho' not Immoral, under ſuch Circumſtances, where the Authority of God does interpoſe; yet, where it does not, are a notorious Breach and Violation of the moral Law, whatever Mode *or* Cuſtom *might be pleaded in Excuſe or Defence of them.*

14. *From what has been ſaid, a very good Argument may be formed, in Proof of* publick Affection, *as a reaſonable and moral Virtue, tho it may ſometimes interfere with private Intereſt. I lay it down, as an acknowledged Truth, that God deſigned Man for a ſociable Creature, and that, conſequently,*

Society

Society is agreeable to the Will and Inſtitution of God. It is an evident Proof of it's being ſo, that Nature, which does nothing in vain, has given to Man, not only proper Capacities for ſeveral Offices in ſocial Life, but proper Diſpoſitions for the Diſcharge of them: To which may be added, that Society is neceſſary to prevent, or remove, many Evils, to which Man, in a ſolitary State, would be expoſed; and to procure a Supply of many Wants; which, at the ſame time, would be unavoidable, and render Life leſs beneficial and deſirable to him.

On Suppoſition, then, that Man was formed for Society, and is become a Member of it; we are to conſider him, as acting in a

very different Capacity from that, which was the Rule of his Action in private Life: We ſhall diſcover him to be under a great many Engagements, ariſing from this new Relation, and the Means it affords of promoting his Welfare and Happineſs; Means ſo obvious and ſalutary, that a very little Reflection will ſerve to ſhew, it was not good for Man to be alone.

Now the Queſtion is, Whether, admitting Society does contribute viſibly to the Benefit and Happineſs of human Life, a Man is under a moral Obligation, as a ſocial Creature, any farther, perhaps, than he finds his own Account in performing certain beneficent Offices, tho' ſeparate from thoſe of publick Good?

Good? So that if any Advantage accruing to him from a private Act of what we call Injuſtice, will more than over-ballance the Loſs, or Inconvenience he ſuſtains thereby, in the Publick, *Whether he is not then at Liberty to prefer his* perſonal *Intereſt to that of the Publick?*

They, who argue from the Defects and corrupt State of human Nature, affirm, that Man never acts but from a Motive of Vanity or Self-love; that what we term publick Spiritedneſs, where Men pretend to ſacrifice their private Affections to the Good of the Community, is nothing more than a refined and well-diſguiſed Hypocriſy; and that, if we could ſee the

ſecret Springs, which move them, we ſhould make a very different Judgment of their Conduct: This is the Principle every where aſſerted by the Author of the * Deceitfulneſs of human Virtues; *of the* Moral Reflections; *and of the* Eſſay upon Comets; *whoſe principal Arguments I have examined, and refuted, in another place, and ſhall not here repeat.*

They, on the other Hand, who argue, which is the only certain way of arguing upon moral Subjects, from the natural Capacities, Diſpoſitions and Powers of Man, and the End of God in endowing him with them, do affirm that certain Obligations,

* Body of Divinity, Vol. 2.

or

or Rules of Action to Man, do as evidently ariſe from them, in reſpect to ſocial, as to ſolitary Life. For, otherwiſe, which ought not to be admitted, the Deſign of God in creating Man with thoſe Capacities, Diſpoſitions, and Powers, might, by an arbitrary Act of Man's Choice, be fruſtrated; and, conſequently, God would appear to have no End, no End worthy of his Wiſdom or Goodneſs in ſuch a Deſign.

Under theſe two different Diſtinctions, of thoſe, who argue from the Defects, and of others, who argue from the proper Faculties of human Nature, and the End of God in them, the Authors of the Search *into the Nature of Society, and of the* Inquiry *concerning Virtue, have divided*

divided, and taken a ſeparate Part. And it is acknowledged by the Author of the Search, "*That* "*two Syſtems cannot be more oppoſite; that the Notions of that* "noble *Writer, which he endeavours to confute, are, at the* "*ſame time, more generous and* "*refined; that they are a high* "*Compliment to human Kind, and* "*capable, by the help of a little* "*Enthuſiaſm, of inſpiring us with* "*moſt noble Sentiments concerning* "*the Dignity of human Nature.* *He adds,* "*What Pity it is they* "*ſhould not be true! I would* "*not advance this much, if I* "*had not already* demonſtrated, "*in almoſt every Page of this* "*Treatiſe, that the Solidity of* "*them is inconſiſtent with our* "*daily Experience.*

Demon-

Demonſtration carries a Force and Evidence with it, where the Terms of it are underſtood, in which reſpect I ſhould be unjuſt to complain of this Author, as deficient, that cannot eaſily be reſiſted by an attentive and impartial Inquirer after Truth: But a Demonſtration, eſpecially in almoſt every Page of a Book, which conſiſts of a great Number of Pages, one would think ſhould invincibly Silence the Diſpute, and for ever cauſe all Oppoſition to fall before it: And, yet, after the ſtricteſt Reſearch into his Performance, I have not been able, nor, I believe, any other Perſon, to diſcover one convicing Proof that a Man never acts from a true Motive of publick Good, when ſuch Good comes

comes in Competition with private Intereſt, or Affection.

This Author has demonſtrated, indeed, that human Nature is very corrupt, and that he is no Stranger to the corrupt State of it; that Pride, and Vanity, and Self-love, abſtracting from all foreign Regards, are the great and general Springs of human Action: In ſhort, that ſome of the brighteſt, and, in common Opinion, the moſt generous and gallant Actions of Men, performed in the publick Service, and, to all appearance, for the publick Good *of their Country, are often owing to theſe indirect and vicious Motives.*

This we readily grant may, *with a high Degree of probability,*

bility, be deduced from daily Experience. *But we deny the Conſequence, that no Man can, or ever has, acted upon a pure diſintereſted Affection for the publick Good; and from a juſt Senſe of thoſe Obligations, which he is under, in relation to it, either from the general Order of Providence, or by Vertue of expreſs and voluntary Compact.*

I ſhall add nothing more upon the former Diſtinction, than, that ſuppoſing Men, in a pure State of Nature, under no Form of Government, or any legal Reſtraints, to which, by common Conſent, they have agreed to ſubmit; yet, even in this Caſe, on Occaſion of their meeting and converſing together, they have not an arbitrary Power of injuring

or deſtroying one another; or of falſifying, *ſuppoſing they had one common Language, in their Words or Oaths; which, yet they would have, and might exerciſe at Pleaſure, if there were no real Diſtinction of moral Good and Evil, independent on Mode, Cuſtom, or human Compact; for thoſe, upon the preſent Suppoſition, are not yet introduced.*

But, that in a State of Nature, Man could have no ſuch Power, appears evidently from hence, that the Exercije of it would be directly oppoſite to the Will and Deſign of God, in qualifying Man to become a Member of Society. Acts, for inſtance, of Violence and Cruelty, would be contrary to thoſe Motions of Pity and Compaſſion, which are

ſo

ſo deeply implanted in our very Frame and Make, that they are in our common Dialect, very properly expreſſed by Humanity, *and, in ſeveral other Languages, by Terms of the like import; as if they were ſo eſſential to human Nature, that it could not be diveſted of them, without being abſolutely deſtroyed. If Man had an unaccountable* Power, *a Race of Tyrants, or a ſingle Tyrant, who could not be reſiſted, might, lawfully, deſtroy all the reſt of Mankind, and ſo be capable, without a Crime, not only of oppoſing the Deſign, but of deſtroying the Work of God. It will be impoſſible, indeed, in this way of arguing, to prove, that* Cain *might not, without incurring any Guilt, have killed his Brother, upon the ſlighteſt Provocation, or without*

any for if the Nature of all Crimes depends on poſitive Laws, where there was no poſitive Law, there could be no Crime. Theſe are the unavoidable Conſequences, which will follow upon the Aſſertion, that the Diſtinction of Virtue and Vice wholly depends on Cuſtom or Compact; and here, I take it, we have a ſtrict Demonſtration from the Order *of Nature and Providence, that this Diſtinction is, and muſt neceſſarily be acknowledged antecedent to Cuſtom and Compact.*

This appears no leſs from the following Inſtance; where I am to ſhew that Men, in a pure State of Nature, can have no arbitrary Power of falſifying in their Words or Oaths. Not in their Words, becauſe that would

would be contrary to the Uſe of Speech, and the many beneficial Ends which would mutually ariſe to Men, from a free and ingenuous Communication of their Thoughts: Neither, in their Oaths, for this additional Reaſon, That an Oath being the moſt ſolemn Sanction that can be given to the Truth of what we ſay, in the Name, and as, in the ſpecial Preſence of God, Perjury is the higheſt Inſtance of Contempt and Diſhonour, that can be offered to his Divine Majeſty; and is, therefore, in the Nature of it, (and, without Regard to any ſubſequent Treaty, or expreſs Stipulation among Men that an Oath ſhall oblige) intrinſically, *which is, what we call,* morally, *Evil.*

But

But where Society is once conſtituted, and Men have agreed to ſubmit to the Articles and Conditions, upon which it was formed; ſeveral new Obligations ariſe, in relation to our Conduct towards other Men; as to which we had before a much greater, and, in ſome caſes, perhaps, an intire Liberty of Diſcretion. Becauſe, without a Reſtraint of ſuch unbounded Liberty, or, ſuppoſing every Man had a lawful *Right to any thing, to which, in his private State, he had a* natural *Right, Society could no longer ſubſiſt in Peace, or maintain itſelf in the free Enjoyment of thoſe Things, which the ſeveral Members of it already poſſeſs. For where all Things are in common, as all*

Things

Things are, or ſhould be, to Man, in private Life, without which others may conveniently live or ſupport themſelves, Property will be reduced into a much narrower Compaſs. And, therefore, under all Forms of Government in the World, whether they be well or ill regulated, Men have expreſly, or interpretatively conſented to depart, in many caſes, from their natural Rights, in conſideration of certain Benefits, which they propoſed to reap, and do generally reap from Society, as an equivalent, or more than an equivalent for them. And, if it was reaſonable for Men to enter into ſuch Engagements, it is equally reaſonable, and, therefore, we ſay, Matter of moral Obligation, flowing from the Law of Nature, that they ſhould afterwards

afterwards ſtand to thoſe Engagements. For, as Grotius *well obſerves, the natural Law does not only oblige, in reſpect to ſuch things as do not depend on human Will; but to ſuch Appointments as have been made by the general Conſent of Mankind: As* Dominion, *he ſuppoſes, was originally introduced by Compact; but being once introduced, it is contrary to natural Right to take away what another has in poſſeſſion, againſt his Conſent; even, tho' it may be of ſuperfluous Uſe to the Proprietor, and very convenient to him who takes it. And it is under this Condition only, I have aſſerted above, that in a State of Nature, Property would be reduced into a much narrower Compaſs: For that no Man can juſtly take away, by Force,*

Force, what is actually in Poſſeſſion of another, and equally convenient for him, appears to be repugnant to natural Equity, even abſtracting from all poſitive Law. And it is in this Senſe, I conceive, Paulus, *the Lawyer, as cited by* Grotius, *affirms, That Theft is forbid by the Law of Nature; that* Ulpian *accounts it diſhoneſt by Nature; and* Euripides, *hateful to God. But to ſay, it is contrary to the Law of Nature to deprive a Man of what he can, without Injury to himſelf, part with; and without which another Perſon cannot well ſubſiſt, here I take it, the Law of Nature is only to be underſtood, in a ſecondary, or conſequential Senſe, as flowing from a Principle of natural Reaſon, on Suppoſition of a*

Man's becoming an incorporated Member of a Common-wealth, and as having ſubjected himſelf to the Laws of it.

So that whether we conſider Man in his more private, or in his ſocial Capacity, there are very good Reaſons why he ſhould, on many Accounts, give up his perſonal Rights for the good of other private Perſons; and, eſpecially, for the publick Good. And if there are Reaſons in the former Reſpect of Humanity, and Compaſſion; in the latter, of Juſtice and Honour, why a Man ſhould do ſo; How can we account for the bold Aſſertion of thoſe Men, who ſay, "Man "never acts but from a Prin- "ciple of vain Glory, or Self- "Love? This is what the Au-

thor

thor of the Deceitfulneſs of human Virtues, *formerly has advanced, and endeavoured to prove by a large Induction of Particulars, which are well choſen, and applyed with much Art. And I have preſumed above, all the Sophiſms and ill Principles of that Book are fully confuted by me in another Place. I have here undertaken the ſame Defence of moral Virtue, in anſwer to a modern Author, who, if he does not diſcover ſo much Reading, upon his Subject, is, perhaps, on ſome Accounts, no leſs qualified to impoſe upon his Reader, and to captivate weak Minds by his Aſſurance and Addreſs. I have not, it is acknowledged, particularly examined all the Exemplifications of his Argument; but I have*

ſaid enough, in general, to obviate any ill Influence they may have upon the main fundamental Articles of Morality; and what has been ſaid upon the former Part of the Search, *may be indifferently applyed to all the following Parts.*

But there is one Argument, which I beg leave to add, as being a ſhort, and, if I miſtake not, a ſatisfactory Anſwer to every Thing; that either Mr. Eſprit, *or the Author of the* Search, *has advanced to ſhew, that a Man always acts from a Motive of Vanity, or Self-love; as Self-love is oppoſed to publick Affection. This Argument, in ſubſtance, was urged before, but it may not be altogether unuſeful to propoſe it here, with ſome Variation,*

ation, as to the form. If Man do not act from a Motive of publick Affection, either by vertue of thoſe natural Inclinations, which God has implanted in him; or of thoſe expreſs Engagements which he is entered into; it muſt be either for want of Knowledge, or Ability: Either his Reaſon is not ſufficient to inform him, how he ſhould act conformably to thoſe Inclinations and Engagements; or if Reaſon be ſufficient to this End, he has yet no Power to follow the Light, or Direction of it. To ſay God has placed us in a State of Life, wherein certain Duties are required of us, neceſſary to the End of it, which we neither know, nor are capable of knowing how to perform, can never be reconciled

reconciled with the Idea we have of the divine Wiſdom. And it is no leſs contrary to all the Ideas we have of the divine Goodneſs and Juſtice, to ſay, that God hath given Men a Light, which they have no Power to follow; and, therefore, ſerves not ſo much to conduct, as to reproach and condemn them. Nothing can be more derogatory to the Honour of God, or reproachful to human Nature, than to ſuppoſe Man cannot *do, upon virtuous Motives, what God, or the State wherein he is placed by God, requires he* ſhould *do; what he has with-all proper Diſpoſitions and Abilities for doing, and what he has obliged himſelf to* do *by expreſs Compact. And yet theſe Conſequences will unavoidably follow,*

follow, if it be once admitted, that Man, in publick Life, never acts from a true Motive of publick Good.

The great Difficulty, which I ſhall not diſſemble, relating to the Matter in queſtion, has been thought to lie here. The End *of Man, that for which God created him, and which he invincibly deſires and purſues, is Happineſs. Now it is ſaid, the publick Good of Society often requires that Man ſhould ſacrifice his private Happineſs to it. Here, therefore, ſeem to be two different Ends, both of them, by Confeſſion, agreeable to divine appointment, and which yet directly interfere, and tend to deſtroy one another. In this caſe, we are asked, What Method*

thod of Reconciliation can be propoſed, that the Author of human Nature, and of human Government, may appear to have acted according to his eſſential Characters of Wiſdom and Goodneſs, in theſe two different Conſtitutions? Since, according to theſe Attributes, he could not have ſo acted, if the reſpective Duties, or Intereſts of them ſhould be found abſolutely incompatible. I ſay abſolutely *incompatible, becauſe it is confeſſed, ſome Competition between the Duties or Intereſts of private, and of ſocial Life, may ſubſiſt, without their mutual Deſtruction, or any juſt and neceſſary Cauſe of their Separation. In this caſe, as in all other Diſputes, which will ſometimes unavoidably happen among the neareſt Relations*

and

and the beſt of Friends; Reaſon, upon an impartial State of the Caſe on both Sides, ſhould determine, which Side ought to yield and ſubmit.

Now, if we will examine impartially, what the different Duties, or Intereſts, of private and ſocial Life may require of us? The Difficulty of the Queſtion will not, I apprehend, be ſo great, but we may eaſily come to a Reſolution upon it.

As the End of private Life is private Happineſs; ſo that of publick Life, is publick Good. Yet, whereof private Happineſs is the prime and original Foundation; and, in which, therefore, we muſt always

preſume it to be included. So that no Man can be obliged to any Duties of Society, which will more than over-balance the Benefits, which he can propoſe to reap from Society. For this would be to propoſe an End, (which no wiſe, or reaſonable Man will do) of leſs Value, than that which is expended or given up, in order to attain it. And, therefore, when a Man becomes a Member of Society, though he may make a voluntary Ceſſion of a great many natural Rights, towards qualifying himſelf to ſhare in the common and legal Rights of it: Yet there are certain fundamental Rights and Privileges, if they ought not rather to be called Properties belonging to human Nature, from which

which Men can never recede, or be obliged to recede, upon any Conſideration whatever. It can never be lawful, for Inſtance, much leſs obligatory to a Man, to commit a Sin, though he might, thereby, ſave the Commonwealth. Not only becauſe no ſubſequent Relation or Compact, in any Kind, can vacate the Obligation, all Men are under, of Obedience to the ſupreme Legiſlator; but becauſe the Evil of Sin, and the dreadful Conſequences, to which it expoſes the Sinner, are greater, than any Good, which he can enjoy, as a Member of Society, or on Account of his doing any Service to it, will ever be able to compenſate.

Some, indeed, have made it a Queſtion, whether a Man can be obliged, for the Service of the Publick, to expoſe himſelf to certain and unavoidable Death? Becauſe, by the Loſs of Life, he loſes all the Benefits, which he expected to reap from Society; and for the Sake of which he became a Member of it.

This Queſtion is the more difficultly accounted for, by thoſe who reſolve the Obligation Mankind are under to the principal Duties of Society, into a certain original Contract, whereby Men agreed to regulate their Behaviour, before they ſigned the Act of their Incorporation. Now, if the Queſtion had been antecedently

antecedently propoſed, whether they would ſacrifice their Lives for the Service of the State, if, immediately, upon their ſigning, they ſhould be commanded to do ſo? It is not very natural to believe, that many of them would have articled upon that Condition.

Whereas, if the Duties owing to Society, or what I here principally intend, to the ſupreme Authority in it, is founded on the paternal *Right, or on any Power antecedently appointed by God, for the better Adminiſtration of civil Government; then there is leſs Diſpute, whether ſuch Power, for neceſſary Ends of Government, may not command a Subject to expoſe himſelf to certain and unavoidable*

unavoidable Death; becauſe, tho' the civil Magiſtrate can give a Man Nothing in Exchange for his Life; yet, an all-powerful God can, and a wiſe and juſt God will repair any Loſs or Suffering, which his Creatures may ſuſtain, by acting in Obedience to his own Inſtitution, and towards attaining the proper Ends of it.

So that, here, we have a full Anſwer to all the Objections, that can be made againſt the Practicableneſs of ſocial Duties, when they come in Competition with the Intereſts of private Life; and which ſhew, indeed, that the Obligations we are under in theſe two different Capacities, are, after all, very conſiſtent.

For

For a Deſire of Happineſs, the invincible Motive to Action in private Life, does not only carry us towards preſent, but towards future Happineſs. Now it is very compatible with ſuch a Deſire, that we ſhould give up ſome Good, which we actually poſſeſs, to the certain Expectation of a diſtant, but far greater Good *in Reverſion.*

This Argument, I am ſenſible, is of no Conſequence to thoſe, who do not believe a future State of Retribution to Men, according to their good or evil Actions in this Life. But the Author of the Search *thinks too juſtly, to incur any Imputation of ſuch a Character. And, therefore, I wiſh, in accounting for*

for the Reaſon, upon which, he ſuppoſeth, Politicians have undertaken to civilize Mankind, he had omitted the following Remark. *

"*That* they *being unable to give* "*ſo many real Rewards, as would* "*ſatisfy all Perſons for every* "*individual Action, they were* "*forced to contrive an imaginary* "*one; that, as a general Equi-*"*valent for the Trouble of Self-*"*denial, ſhould ſerve on all Oc-*"*caſions; and, without coſting any* "*Thing either to themſelves, or* "*others, be yet a moſt accepta-*"*ble Recompenſe to the Receivers.*

This Recompenſe, as he proceeds to explain it, is Flattery. Concerning which, conſidered by him as the principal Spur to human Action, I ſhall not repeat, what

* Page 29.

what has been ſaid already. The only Reflection, I ſhall make upon the Paſſage here cited, is, that the Author wholly aſcribes to a ſiniſter and indirect Motive, what naturally might have been aſcribed, I will add, what a Man who believes a future State, and attends to the proper Conſequences of his Belief, would *certainly have aſcribed to the Influence of it, upon much better Grounds. He will never be able to ſhew, that the Perſons, by whoſe Wiſdom Societies were firſt erected and modelled, and who preſcribed juſt and wholſome Laws for the Government of them, would not conſider, how Obedience to thoſe Laws might be moſt effectually enforced; and, particularly by ſuch Sanctions, as would have the moſt powerful Effect upon their Hopes, and their*

Fears; Paſſions, which never operate, or ought to operate, with ſo great Force and Energy, as when they are moved by Conſiderations, taken from a firm Belief concerning a future State.

And, indeed, it may of itſelf be urged as a very good Argument, in Proof of a future State, that the Duties which Men owe, or the Sacrifice, which, in certain Caſes, they are obliged to make to Society, are greater, in Proportion, than the Benefits they receive from Society: At leaſt, their Service, perhaps their moſt meritorious Actions, for the publick Good, do, ſometimes, tend to their Ruin; and even, in vulgar Opinion, to their Diſgrace. Now it is highly reaſonable to believe, tho' ſuch accidental Diſorders, ariſing from the preſent

ſent State of Things, cannot be totally prevented, except God ſhould interpoſe to prevent them, by a miraculous Power; yet he will, ſometime, abundantly ſupply all Deficiencies of that Kind in civil Life; eſpecially ſuch, as happen to good Men, in conſequence of their acting by Virtue of his own Appointment.

But there is no Occaſion for me to inſtance in ſuch extraordinary Caſes; or to enter upon a nice Inquiry, concerning all the Meaſures of civil Obedience. What the Author has advanced againſt the Practicableneſs of civil Duties, from a truly virtuous Principle, is expreſſed in general Terms, and applicable to ſuch Caſes, as ordinarily occur in civil Life. His Arguments proceed, according to the common Idea Men

have of Self-denial; *without conſidering it as exerciſed on this or that particular, and very preſſing Occaſion; for which Reaſon his Notion, that Self-denial is never practiſed from a true Motive of Virtue, or publick Affection, is more indefenſible; as his Endeavour to defend it is, at the ſame Time, more offenſive and injurious to human Nature; which corrupt as it may appear in common Practice, or in the Writings of ſome Men, yet, bleſſed be God, is not wholly, nor univerſally, depraved in Principle.*

I have done with the Principles of this Writer, upon the Subject of moral Virtue. And he can have no Reaſon to complain, that he has, on any Account, been treated after an unbecoming

becoming or injurious Manner. I ſhall, rather, perhaps, be thought blameable, for expreſſing my ſelf with ſo much Tenderneſs, in a Cauſe, which might ſeem to require a greater Ardour and Severity of Expreſſion. But the Author is ſtill more obnoxious, when he reduces his pernicious ſpeculative Opinions to Practice; and endeavours to corroborate what he had advanced upon falſe, at the beſt, upon very precarious Grounds, by a diſtinct and perſonal *Application. However, I ſhall only take Notice, in particular, of the Injuſtice, which he hath done to the Memory of a late moſt eminent Phyſician; and of ſeveral Things, which he hath ſaid, on that Occaſion, highly reflecting upon the Honour of one of the moſt celebrated Seats of*

Learning

Learning in the World, The Relation, which, I have had the Honour of bearing both to the injured Party, and Place, would have juſtified the following Reflections, though the Nature of my Deſign, in this Preface, had not ſo directly opened a Way to them.

In an Eſſay upon Charity and Charity Schools, *as a remarkable Inſtance of that* Pride *and* Vanity, *which this Gentleman makes the general Springs of human Action, he particularly mentions a* prodigious Gift, (*the Gift of Doctor* Radcliffe *to the Univerſity of* Oxford) which had made a great Noiſe in the World. *He propoſeth to* ſet this Matter in the Light it deſerves; *and* begs Leave, for once, to pleaſe *Pedants*, to treat

treat it ſomewhat rhetorically.

I do not enquire, what Sort of Perſons, or what Body of Men, he here compliments ſo reſpectfully with the Character of Pedants. *I am willing to believe he did not deſign, what the Courſe of his* rhetorical *Effuſions would naturally enough lead one to think he* might *deſign. I ſhall only obſerve concerning the Motives, to which he imputes the noble Benefaction of Doctor* Radcliffe *to the Univerſity, that he has ſcarce ſaid any Thing, but upon ſuch Suppoſitions, which if we may be allowed* arbitrarily *to make, there never was, or ever will be a generous and diſintereſted Benefaction in the World. It will be impoſſible to inſtance in any one pious, or charitable*

Foundation,

Foundation, where the Founder might not be conceived, if mere Surmiſes would authorize a ſiniſter Judgment of their Intention, to have been acted, in one Reſpect or other, by ſome indirect View.

The greateſt Appearance of Argument, whereby this Writer would ſupport his Judgment concerning Doctor Radcliff's *Bequeſt, is, that "He left a Trifle to his "Relations who ſtood in Need of "it, and an immenſe Treaſure "to an Univerſity, that did not "want it.*

The former Part of this Charge is not altogether groundleſs; and I would, by no Means, leſſen the Motives of Tenderneſs and Compaſſion, naturally, implanted in Men

Men towards their neareſt Relations. Yet there ſeems to be a greater diſcretionary Liberty left to thoſe, who have raiſed an Eſtate, in the Diſpoſition which they may think to make of it towards any pious or publick Uſes. The Ties of Blood are ſo ſtrong, that there is ſeldom Occaſion to uſe any Arguments to enforce them. Men, when they hear the Voice of Nature calling upon them, are rather apt, in following it, to be righteous overmuch. *The Fault, if it be really a Fault, to prefer the publick Good, in any Kind, to private Affection, doth not commonly lie that way. This, at leaſt, may reaſonably be preſumed, that a Perſon who ſhould poſtpone many private Conſiderations towards the Advancement of ſome publick Good, diſcovers both a much*

greater Mind, and a better Diſpoſition of Heart; than a Perſon, (which is the common Caſe of the World) who, in a vaſt Fortune, centers all his Deſires in aggrandizing his private Family, without any Bowels of Compaſſion towards the reſt of Mankind; or without exerciſing any Acts of Beneficence, in Proportion, to the Opportunities, which he hath of doing Good.

There is, after all, great Difficulty in fixing the preciſe Bounds, between private and publick Affection. And, in every Caſe, where the Meaſures of our Duty are leſs aſcertained, the Rule, to all ingenuous Minds, is to follow the Judgment of Charity, not, with this Gentleman, to proceed wholly upon precarious, arbitrary, and un-

uncharitable Preſumptions. Dr. Radcliffe *ſeems, indeed, principally to have incurred the virulent Cenſures here paſſed upon him, not ſimply, becauſe he made a moſt beneficent Bequeſt of his Eſtate by Will; but, becauſe, he did not make a Diſpoſition of it, exactly in this Writer's own Way: yet an Error in Judgment, if, upon a feigned Conceſſion, the Doctor had been really chargeable with ſuch Error, ought not to leſſen, neither, with Perſons of any Candour,* will *it leſſen, the Merit of a good and laudable Intention.*

When, it is ſaid, the Univerſity did not want *ſuch a Benefaction; the Expreſſion is equivocal. If it be intended, the Doctor's Bequeſt was not, abſolutely, neceſ-*

ſary to ſupport the Honour and Dignity of the Univerſity; this is readily granted; but ſeveral Conveniencies may be deſirable, and, in a Senſe, wanting, *without which, Things may, notwithſtanding, ſtill ſubſiſt in a good State. And the Advantages towards the Improvement of Learning in* Oxford, *great as they are, in many Reſpects, are not yet ſo great, as to admit no future Augmentations.*

But, whatever might be the Motives to Dr. Radcliffe's *Beneficence; why ſhould an Occaſion be taken from it, to aſperſe and depretiate him in his Character, as a* Phyſician? *Why is he repreſented, to mention none of the other Calumnies, whereby this anonymous Writer would blacken his*

his Memory, as " having ſmall " Skill in Phyſick, and ſcarce any " Learning; as one who inſinu- " ated himſelf into Practice by " vile Arts; and who ſcorned to " conſult with his Betters, on " any Emergency ſoever; looking " down with Contempt on the " moſt deſerving of his Profeſ- " ſion; and never conferring with " any other Phyſician; but what " would pay Homage to his ſupe- " rior Genius; creep to his Hu- " mour, and never approach him, " but with all the ſlaviſh Obſe- " quiouſneſs a Court Flatterer " can treat a Prince with."

Theſe are Matters of high Charge; and, in the laſt Article, not only the Doctor, but other eminent Phyſicians are concerned; Two, eſpecially, as great and bright

bright Ornaments of their Profeſſion, as have been ſeen in any Age; and whoſe Names will live, in future Ages, when thoſe, who envy their Succeſs and Reputation, may be no more remembered.

Yet, upon what Grounds after all, are theſe Calumnies raiſed, with ſeveral others, which the Reſpect due to the Memory of ſo conſiderable a Perſon, will not permit me to recite; and which are deſigned to tranſmit his Character to Poſterity under black and odious Colours? It might, in ſuch a Caſe, have been expected, that good Evidence would be brought to confirm the ſeveral Parts of the Charge againſt him: And yet, in Proof of his Demerits, we are only referred

to

to a Train of Accuſations, which, ſeverally, want to be proved *themſelves; and which, were they really true, ought not to be believed upon the bare Aſſertion of a Perſon ſo viſibly prepoſſeſſed: But ſome of them are contrary,* directly *contrary, to known Facts. He was ſo far from treating the moſt* deſerving *of his Profeſſion with Contempt, and refuſing* ever *to confer with them, or with* any *of them, as the Words of this Writer import, that ſome of them might be named, had I a Permiſſion to name them, allowed, without forming invidious Compariſons, to have, at leaſt, equal Pretenſions to that Character, with the moſt celebrated of the Faculty, who had a particular Share in his Confidence and Friendſhip; and with whom he* frequently *conferred:*

red: Perſons, ſo far from diſcovering any Thing of that mean and ſervile Obſequiouſneſs, which is here made the Character of a Court Paraſite, either in their Temper, or Behaviour: That, had I a Deſign of ſetting ſuch a Character in a ſtronger Light, I could not ſucceed more happily, than by oppoſing to it, thoſe very Inſtances of a juſt and generous Manner.

If the Doctor did really look down with Contempt upon any Perſons, it was upon thoſe, and upon thoſe only, who had Recourſe to vile and ignoble Methods, towards opening a Way to Practice. And this might be, and I have Reaſon to believe, was the true Cauſe, why he, ſometimes, refuſed to confer with others of the ſame Faculty. Inſtances might be

be named where even they, who had been recommended by him to Buſineſs, which through Abſence, or ſome ſpecial Avocations, he could not attend himſelf, made no Scruple of practiſing, on that very Occaſion, certain little indirect Arts, which he could by no Means approve. He underſtood the Importance and Excellency of that Profeſſion, at the Head of which, under the Direction of Providence, the publick Judgment, and his own Merits, had placed him; and the Abuſes, which he obſerved, had crept into certain Branches of it, rendered him very cautious how he either conſulted with thoſe who connived at ſuch Abuſes, or employed any ſubordinate Inſtruments in promoting them. He was, therefore, particularly, careful in the Choice

of his Apothecaries, as well as of the Phyſicians, with whom, in Caſes of Difficulty, he found it requiſite to confer; and, on all ſuch Occaſions, what he had, principally, Regard to, was the Honour of his Profeſſion, and the Good of his Patients: Theſe were the Ends which he preferred to all partial, and foreign Conſiderations whatever. And he had always thoſe Phyſicians in the greateſt Eſteem, who purſued theſe Ends; and upon whom, therefore, his Buſineſs has ſo juſtly devolved; Gentlemen, who deſpiſed thoſe little Arts of Addreſs, whether to the Apothecaries, or to the Populace, which are, ſometimes, found neceſſary to give thoſe Practitioners a current Value about the Town, who want, and are, perhaps, conſcious to themſelves they

they want an intrinſick Value.

Had Dr. Radcliffe *really deſigned to encourage any mean Arts, either towards acquiring, or preſerving the publick Eſteem; He who knew the World ſo well, and, on all Occaſions, how to make his Court, would have employed proper Agents and Emiſſaries to that End. And theſe he could not have wanted eſpecially, among ſuch Number of irregular Pretenders to Phyſick, native and foreign, wherewith we abound, who yet know well enough to what Illuſions the People are moſt ſubject, and how they may be ſooneſt* captivated. *But as he had no Need of ſuch* Operators, *ſo he ſcorned to make Uſe of them, and of thoſe, who employed them.*

Whatever, therefore, this Writer might have ſaid to the Diminution of Dr. Radcliffe's *Character in general; for he was not without his Defects; yet it was very wrong to leſſen him in that Part of his Character, wherein the greateſt Glory of it conſiſted: And that was, in a generous Contempt of every Thing, which he apprehended, would, on any Account, tend to depretiate it. Neither was it, in the leaſt, an Argument of the Doctor's* Vanity, *tho' I would not be thought to exempt him from a Frailty too common both to great and little Men in all Profeſſions, that in the Methods he took towards preſerving the Honour of his proper Faculty, he was, eſpecially, careful to preſerve his own.*

Beſides

Beſides the Indecency of diſturbing the Aſhes of the Dead, and of treating thoſe with Obloquy and Reproach, who are not capable of anſwering for themſelves, this Writer makes but a very awkard Compliment to many, if I might not ſay to moſt of the Families of Quality in the Kingdom, in repreſenting the Perſon employed by them for ſo many Years, and who was in ſo great Reputation with them for his Skill and Succeſs in Phyſick; yet as having, in Truth, very few, or rather none, of the Qualifications proper to a Phyſician.

To which of our two Univerſities this Gentleman owes his Education, or whether to any, I do not know. I ſhall only obſerve far-

farther, that his Reflections concerning the Abuſe of commemorative Praiſes in Honour of the Dead, are indifferently applicable to all *Univerſities, and to* all *other Places, where Gratitude may oblige Men to pay them: Nay, if we may argue in general, from the Abuſe of Things againſt the Reaſonableneſs and Expediency of them, it will be equally criminal to make any publick honorary Acknowledgment to a* living, *and to a* dead *Benefactor. All his rhetorical Exaggerations, therefore, on this Head, might be diſmiſſed, at once, as proving too much, if they be really intended to prove any Thing. Such are the bright and ſelect Paſſages following.* "*A rich Miſer, who is thoroughly ſelfiſh, and would receive the Intereſt of his Money,*

"*even*

" *even after his Death, has No-*
" *thing elſe to do, than to de-*
" *fraud his Relations, and leave*
" *his Eſtate to ſome famous Uni-*
" *verſity.* They *are the beſt*
" *Markets to buy Immortality at*
" *with little Merit.*---" *There,*
" *extraordinary Bounties ſhall,*
" always, *meet with an extraor-*
" *dinary Recompence; and the*
" *Meaſure of the Gift is ever*
" *the Standard of their Praiſes;*
" *whether the Donor be a Phy-*
" *ſician,* or, as he decently ex-
" preſſeth himſelf, *a* Tinker." *All theſe fine Strictures tend only to ſhew, that good and laudable Deſigns* may *be perverted to ill Ends. But there is no Neceſſity, why Perſons of ingenuous Minds ſhould ſuppoſe, they* will *be ſo perverted, and* always *ſo perverted. It ſhould rather be*

preſumed,

preſumed, that Men of a liberal and learned Education, who have a Senſe of moral Virtue, ſhould correct former Errors, if they have really committed any, than that they ſhould perſiſt in repeating them; eſpecially, after ſuch a kind, tender, and amicable Admonition, from ſo extraordinary a moral *Writer.*

I cannot conclude this Preface, though it may be thought too much enlarged already, without obſerving, that what Attempts ſoever have been made by private Perſons, or Confederacies of Men, to deſtroy all Principles of Religion and moral Virtue; yet we do not want civil Magiſtrates, who have thought it their Duty to obviate thoſe wicked and execrable Schemes, which they found had

had been projected, to that End. I think it particularly incumbent on me, on this Occaſion, to mention, in Honour of the worthy Gentlemen, at that Time, of the Grand Jury *of* Middleſex, two Preſentments *made by them, in* July *laſt: Both which will be preſerved as perpetual ſtanding Monuments, to ſhew, that how numerous ſoever the open Advocates of Irreligion and Vice, at preſent, are; or how conſiderable ſoever they may affect to be thought, on Account of their Friends and Adherents: Yet ſtill we have Perſons of Character and Merit, in Authority, who know, how to expreſs a pious and juſt Reſentment, at any open Diſhonour done to God, to their Prince, and to their Country. For whatever Men of weak*

Minds, or thoſe, who have ſome wicked Cauſe to ſerve, may believe, or pretend, the true Intereſts of the State, and thoſe of Religion and Morality, will always be found inſeparable. What ſhall we then ſay, either concerning the publick Affection, *or the political Notions of thoſe Men? who endeavour to ſubvert the true Foundations, at once, of all* civil *and* religious *Obedience, after an audacious and undiſguiſed Manner, never attempted before, I do not ſay, in any Chriſtian Nation, but in any other Nation, under Heaven!*

Both thoſe Preſentments, to which I refer, were ſo well and judiciouſly drawn up; with ſuch a true Spirit of Piety, and founded upon ſuch juſt and cogent Reaſons,

ſons, reſpecting the Honour, Dignity, and Intereſt of the Sovereign, and the Good of the Community in general, as well as the Intereſts of Religion; that a Tranſcript of them might have been very acceptable to the Reader. But, I ſhall, only, take the Liberty to recite two Paragraphs, from the Latter *of them*; That *having a more immediate Relation to the Book, I have undertaken to anſwer*; *And, as it gave the firſt Occaſion of my Undertaking to anſwer it, will be the beſt Apology for that full, and copious Anſwer, I have made to it*; *which, otherways, it might not ſo well have appeared to deſerve.*

"*That a general Libertiniſm*
"*may the more effectually be*

" *eſtabliſhed, the* Univerſities
" *are decried, and all* Inſtructi-
" ons of Youth, *in the Principles*
" *of the Chriſtian Religion, are*
" *exploded, with the greateſt*
" *Malice and Falſity.*

" *The more effectually to carry*
" *on theſe Works of Darkneſs,*
" *ſtudied Artifices, and invented*
" *Colours, have been made uſe of,*
" *to run down Religion and Vir-*
" *tue, as* prejudicial *to Society,*
" *and detrimental to the State;*
" *and to recommend Luxury,*
" *Avarice, Pride, and all Kind*
" *of Vices, as being neceſſary to*
" publick Welfare; *and not tend-*
" *ing to the* Deſtruction *of the*
" *Conſtitution. Nay, the very*
" Stews *themſelves have had*
" *ſtrained Apologies, and forced*
" *Encomiums made in their Fa-*

" *vour,*

" *vour, and produced in print;*
" *with Deſign, we conceive, to*
" *debauch the Nation.*

Such bold and ſtagitious Attempts, when publickly avowed, might very juſtly, indeed, provoke the Animadverſion of the civil Magiſtrate. If it might not have become the Ardour of ſome of our very learned Fathers, upon an Occaſion ſo highly provoking, to have exerted that primitive and apoſtolical Spirit, with which they are animated, and to have reproved, rebuked, *and* exhorted with all Authority. *It might be wiſhed, at leaſt, that ſome Perſon of Diſtinction in the Church, whoſe Weight, and Influence, would have enforced the Argument, had undertaken to confute thoſe wicked and deteſtable Princi-*

Principles, againſt which, according to the Meaſure of my mean Abilities, I have here thought it my Duty to bear Teſtimony: Which yet, I hope, by the Bleſſing of God, may be rendered, in ſome Degree, ſubſervient towards the intended Effect.

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CHAP.

CHAP. I.

That there is a real Diſtinction between moral Good *and* Evil.

I. *Wherein this Diſtinction is founded.* II, III, IV, V. *Illuſtrations of it from ſenſible Objects.* VI, VII, VIII. *Yet the Idea of Order not taken from the juſt or beautiful Proportion between ſenſible Objects, but pre-ſuppoſed.* IX. *Confirmed by a Sentiment of* Cicero. X. *An Application of it.* XI, XII, XIII. *An Objection propoſed,* XIV. *and more particularly*

cularly ſolved from the Conſideration of a ſtrait, and of a crooked Line. XV, XVI. *What Advantage may be made of it towards proving the real Diſtinction of moral Virtue.*

I. Lay it down as the Foundation of my preſent Deſign, that the Diſtinction of moral Good and Evil depends on the Nature of Things, and the different Relations, wherein they ſtand towards each other; that this Diſtinction, therefore, is not owing to any meer poſitive Law or Appointment whatever, human or divine; nor to any Cuſtom, general Conſent of Mankind, or Opinion

nion of particular Perſons; but ariſeth from a certain Agreement or Diſagreement, Proportion or Diſproportion, which natural Reaſon, when we duly attend to it, will not fail to diſcover between the Things themſelves, about which it is converſant.

II. As when we therefore behold material Objects preſented to the Sight, and compare them together, ſome of them are obſerved to be greater or leſs than other, ſome of a circular, ſquare, or triangular Form; from which their different Magnitude and Configuration we infer, there is a natural Incapacity in them towards producing, in concert, any regular or uniform Work: So upon Inquiry, whether ſuch Actions, about which moral Agents may deliberate, ought to be done,

if we obſerve any thing diſagreeable or unbecoming in them, we conclude them naturally irregular and improper to be done. Thus when we conſider Man as a *moral*, and when under the Notion of a *natural*, or *artificial* Agent, the Difference, in reſpect to the Symmetry or Diſproportion of his Work, is equally viſible.

III. Yet this Difference will ſtill appear in a ſtronger Light, if we make a Judgment concerning moral Actions, not meerly on Account of their Beauty or Regularity, ariſing from the Relation, which the Things about which they are converſant, bear to one another; but more directly, as they ſtand in Relation to us; as they are ſubſervient to our Uſe; and tend to promote our Happineſs, or our Perfection.

IV. A Man is pleaſed with ſeeing a beautiful and regular Building, tho' he has no Propriety in it; nor any other Advantage, than that of gratifying, by the Sight of it, the natural Love which he hath for Order and Proportion. But if he is perſonally intereſted in ſuch a Building, and reflects that it was deſigned with all the Conveniences about it, for his more immediate Uſe and Service, this ſtill contributes to heighten the Joy of his Proſpect, and to make him more in Love with the Beauty of Order, by a ſenſible Application.

V. We form the like Sentiments in regard to moral Actions. When we ſee Man conducting himſelf according to the Order and Perfection of his Nature; or doing any thing that is truly great, or

noble, ſuited to the Dignity, the Wiſdom or Goodneſs of a reaſonable Agent, we take a ſecret Pleaſure in reflecting upon his Conduct, tho' it is upon no other Account beneficial to us. But if we are in any reſpect perſonally affected by it, or it ſhould have an immediate and direct Influence towards making us more happy, or more perfect, the Impreſſions, we ſhould receive from it, would, for that reaſon, be ſo much more lively and forcible.

VI. I would not however infer from what has been ſaid, that the proper Method, as ſome have pretended, of maintaining the real Diſtinction of moral Virtue, is to argue from the agreeable Sentiments, wherewith the Mind is naturally poſſeſſed, when we obſerve a juſt and beautiful Proportion

tion between the Works of Nature, or Art: For here, ſay they, we have nothing to do but to transfer the Idea of Order, from which thoſe Sentiments ariſe in the Mind, to ſuch Actions, which Mankind have agreed to call *moral.*

VII. If they only intend hereby, that the Method of letting Men into the Knowledge of intellectual Truths, by ſenſible Arguments and Alluſions, is very proper; that naked Truth is too bright a Form, for the Generality of Mankind to contemplate; and that we muſt therefore endeavour to enlighten their Minds by ſpeaking to their Senſes and Imagination; it is readily granted, there is no Inconvenience in this way of arguing. But if it be intended, this Method is not deſigned ſo

much for an *Illuſtration* concerning the Certainty of moral Virtue, as a ſtrict and direct Proof of the Thing, we aver it to be unjuſt, and altogether prepoſterous: We ought to conclude, that becauſe the ſenſible Eye is delighted with external Beauty and Order, there is, therefore, ſuch a thing as internal Beauty and Order, from which that Delight proceeds, as from its real and true *Source*.

VIII. For in the natural Order of our Ideas, concerning two Subjects, the nobler and more perfect is the Rule and Meaſure of the other, but ſhould by no means either be regulated by it, or be conſidered as *prior* to it.

IX. And therefore, we may juſtly queſtion, whether the ſenſible Eye is not delighted with the Order and Beauty of ſenſible Objects,

jects, *meerly* and *ſolely* for this Reaſon, that there is *antecedently* in the Soul an Idea and Love of intellectual Order, from which that of ſenſible Order takes its Riſe. *Cicero* is of Opinion, which appears to be grounded upon this Principle, * That there is no other ſublunary Creature but Man, ſenſible of the Beauty, Comelineſs, and Order of Parts, in external Objects. The Difference therefore, which Man obſerves on theſe ſeveral Accounts, between ſuch Objects, muſt naturally be ſuppoſed to ariſe from his transferring the Sentiments of the Mind, concerning intellectual Order, to them:

* Itaq; eorum ipſorum, quæ aſpectu ſentiuntur, nullum aliud Animal, pulchritudinem, venuſtatem, convenientiam Partium ſentit.

For

For tho' he acknowledgeth, the Mind takes Occaſion to apply the Idea of Order, ariſing from ſenſible Objects, towards the better Regulation of our moral Conduct, that * Beauty, Comelineſs, and Order, ought much more to be *preferred* by moral Agents; yet he mentions, and muſt neceſſarily do ſo in his way of arguing, this Idea of Order from ſenſible Objects, not as the *formal* or *efficient* Cauſe of the intellectual Order, but only as an *Image*, that may on occaſion be uſefully employed to illuſtrate it; and in this Senſe we are to explain what he

* Quam ſimilitudinem natura, ratioque ab oculis ad animum transferens, multo magis pulchritudinem, conſtantiam, ordinem in conſiliis factiſque conſervandum putat.

adds

adds upon the Argument.* "From "hence ariſeth moral Honeſty, "the Subject of our preſent In- "quiry; which tho' it ſhould "not always be eſteemed, as it "ought to be, is, notwithſtand- "ing, *moral Honeſty*, and Praiſe- "worthy in itſelf, tho' no Perſon "ſhould *obſerve* or *applaud* it."

X. If the different Judgments then, which we make concerning the Order and Proportion of Parts in reſpect to material Subſtances, is certainly founded in ſome Equality or Inequality between them, on Account of their reſpective Magnitude or Figure, and does not depend on any hu-

* Quibus ex rebus conflatur & efficitur id quod querimus *Honeſtum*. Quod etiamſi nobilitatum non ſit, tamen honeſtum ſit, quodque vere dicimus, etiamſi a nullo laudatur, laudabile eſſe natura.

man

man Compact, or private Opinion; or, I will add, even on any poſitive Will or Command of the ſupreme Being; Contradictions being impoſſible to the divine Power itſelf; which therefore cannot effect, that a Part ſhould be of equal Magnitude or Extent, ſo as to take up the ſame Space with the Whole; that a circular ſhould, at the ſame Time, be a triangular Figure; or that two Bodies ſhould be exactly uniform, and yet of a different Form. If there are, we ſay, ſuch real and immutable Differences, independent on any foreign Power, or Cauſe whatever, in material Objects, there is ſtill greater Reaſon to believe a real and immutable Difference with reſpect to moral or intellectual Objects: Since, according to the Principle, upon which

which I have been arguing, after *Cicero*, it is from the *Underſtanding*, and not directly from any ſenſible Impreſſions, that we are pleaſed with the Beauty of external Order, and diſpleaſed with every thing repugnant to it.

XI. To this, perhaps, it may be ſaid, that the Degrees of more and leſs, the Ideas of Figure, of Extenſion and Magnitude, are proper only to Bodies; and that we cannot therefore argue demonſtratively from the Difference, in ſenſible Objects on theſe Accounts, to a Difference between Objects of a moral Conſideration, which are not capable of the like Circumſtances.

XII. I have already in Part obviated this Suggeſtion, by ſhewing, that the Argument we employ

ploy on Occaſion of ſenſible Objects, to diſcover the Beauty of Order and Proportion, is not uſed as an antecedent Proof, but only as a conſequential Illuſtration of moral Virtue. There is ſomething in the Action of Man conſidered as a moral Agent, if not ſtrictly the ſame with what we obſerve in material Operations, which, however, bears a viſible Reſemblance to them: Tho' his Action therefore, in that Capacity, does not fall under the Senſes, or under the ſame Circumſtances with *Quantity*, yet there is a certain Agreement or Diſagreement, Conveniency or Inconveniency, in the Reaſon of it; from which, if he depart, we conclude his Action to be equally irregular, as a Building, between whoſe Parts there is no Manner of Proportion

portion or Correſpondence; or as a Line that is drawn a quite different way from the Point, towards which it ought to be carried.

XIII. And the latter of theſe Images being more abſtracted from the Circumſtances or Parts of Quantity, I ſhall, eſpecially, confine myſelf to it, in order to a more plain and familiar Diſcovery of moral Virtue, from a Conſideration of material Objects.

XIV. If you ask then, when I call a Line irregular, which is not carried towards its proper Point directly, but by oblique or crooked Strokes, how does it therefore follow, that any Action of Man, conſider'd as a moral Agent, is alſo irregular? I anſwer; becauſe Reaſon, in both Caſes, and

and in all other Caſes, doth require, that whatever End is propoſed, it ought to be purſued by the moſt ſimple, the moſt direct, and practicable Means. This is the Rule impreſſed by the Author of Nature on all his Works; inanimate Beings follow it with all their Force and Activity: If a Paſſage ſhould be opened to the Center of the Earth, and a Stone were thrown into it, it would deſcend continually in a direct Line, provided nothing might happen to divert or alter the Courſe of its Motion. All Animals, I do not inquire whether they have any Senſation or Deſign in what they do, have the ſame natural Impulſe, and move towards the Place or Object, to which they are inclined, by the ſhorteſt and eaſieſt Way. An Eagle that deſcribes

ſcribes ſeveral circular Motions in the Air, in order to diſcover her Prey; yet when ſhe has once marked it out with her Eye, and finds the way open for a Seizure, ſtoops with all her Force and Swiftneſs directly upon it. And ſhall we imagine, while all other Beings are directed in their Motions by ſome certain Rule, eſpecially by this common Rule of purſuing what appears deſirable to them, by the moſt eaſy and ſimple Means, *that* Man alone, who, among all terreſtrial Beings, is capable of knowing his Rule, of diſcovering the Reaſons upon which he ought to act, and of following them by a diſtinct Perception, ſhould yet be without any Rule for his Behaviour, conſidered properly *as* Man? Or is it agreeable to the Character

of an infinitely wiſe and good God, to believe, he has created all other Things in *Number*, *Weight*, and *Meaſure*, and yet left Man, the nobleſt and moſt excellent of his viſible Works, to act without any regard to *Order* or Proportion; and in particular to the Rule, I have now mentioned? A Rule, according to which all other Beings are not only obſerved to act; but whereby even the moſt perfect Being himſelf does inviolably conduct his own Action.

XV. Now I deſire no more ſhould be granted towards demonſtrating the real Diſtinction of moral Virtue, than that Man, ſuppoſed a reaſonable Agent, is obliged antecedently to any *poſitive* Inſtitution, human or divine, to conduct himſelf by *this* Rule, that

that is, by purſuing what he propoſes to attain *as* good or convenient for him, by the moſt eaſy, ſimple, and practicable Means. Upon this Conceſſion, which no reaſonable Perſon will ſcruple to make, it will unavoidably follow, that in the natural and neceſſary Reaſon of Things, the Diſtinction of moral *Good* may be eſtabliſhed, and conſequently of moral Evil, after the ſame Manner, whereby we diſcover a Line to be crooked, by comparing it with a ſtreight Line.

XVI. I have then nothing more to do, in proſecuting this Argument, but to inquire, whether there are not certain Actions, which have a *direct* Tendency to promote the Good and Happineſs of Man; and by means of which he will much ſooner,

and more eaſily attain his End, than he would do by a contrary or different Practice? In order to a Reſolution of which Inquiry, it may be proper to conſider, in the firſt Place, what the proper End of Man really is? for *that* being once diſcovered, we may better find the true and direct Way that leads to it.

CHAP. II.

What the proper End of Man is?

I, II. *The End of Man conſidered in two Reſpects, and why.* III. *A farther Reaſon of this Diſtinction.* IV. *The Uſe of it.*

it. V, VI. *A Difficulty propoſed, and anſwered from the violent Impreſſions made upon us by Means of ſenſible Objects.* VII. *The Wiſdom and Holineſs of God vindicated, notwithſtanding what was objected.* VIII. *The Objection farther conſidered, and refuted.* IX. *The particular Reaſon of conſidering it in reſpect to the Author's Method.*

I. THE End of Man may be conſidered as having reſpect either to his Perfection, or to his Happineſs.

II. I ſhall begin with the former Diſtinction; for theſe two Things, on Account of the preſent State of Mankind, admit of a very different Conſideration. Tho' in a ſeperate State of the Soul

Soul from the Body, we cannot eaſily conceive any Grounds for ſuch a Diſtinction; for certainly a pure Intelligence will be more happy in Proportion as it is perfect; and more perfect, in Proportion as it is happy. Whereas, in the preſent Union of Soul and Body, we often ſeek and find Happineſs, ſuch as it is, in Things, not which tend to the Perfection of human Nature, but to vitiate and debaſe it. Pleaſure and Happineſs are inſeperable; whatever therefore has a Power of pleaſing us, has, in the ſame Degree, a Power of making us happy: Now it being neceſſary to the Preſervation of the ſenſible Life, that we ſhould be affected with Pleaſure, in the Uſe or Enjoyment of ſenſible Objects, we are often excited

cited to deſire them, and unite ourſelves to them, after an irregular Manner. Finding a preſent Satisfaction in them, we are diverted from attending to thoſe nobler, but at preſent leſs affecting Operations of the Mind; wherein the Perfection of our nobler Part conſiſts. This is the Reaſon, why Men, by Degrees, immerſe themſelves ſo deep in ſenſual Applications, that it is difficult to put a Thought or Deſire into them worthy of reaſonable Beings, of Beings created after the Image of God. They have no Notion of any thing but what they ſee, feel or taſt, or which has ſome relation to gratify the Appetites of animal Life. If, at any time, we are able to impreſs a Sentiment upon them relating to

a future Life, and the Rewards of a *reaſonable* Service; the moſt effectual Way is, to obumbrate to them intellectual and divine Truths, by ſenſible Alluſions; as of thoſe, for Inſtance, to a Feaſt, to a Kingdom, to a Houſe with Variety of *Manſions*, and other like Objects of human Deſire; of which, indeed, the Scriptures themſelves, in Condeſcention to the common Ideas and Underſtanding of Men, condeſcend to make uſe; and ſo lead them to the Diſcovery of intellectual Truths, in a Way ſuited to their groſs Imaginations; as Children eaſier learn to read, when we put Books into their Hands, adorned on the outſide or within, with painted emblematical Figures.

III. They are not only the Vulgar, whoſe Thoughts are taken up

up with ſenſible Objects and Appearances; but we ſcarce hear any thing, but the Language of the ſenſible World, from Men of a more refined Education. *Metaphyſicks*, the moſt probable Means, next to the Grace of God, of opening the Eye of human Underſtanding, of beautifying and enlarging its Proſpect, are too generally neglected: The very Method of modern Study ſeems rather calculated to fit Men for a Commerce in Life, that regards the Decencies of external Behaviour, than to improve the Mind in the Knowledge of Things worthy of a rational Purſuit, and whereby the Strength of it may be augmented, or its native Liberty reſtored.

IV. This may ſerve to ſhew, how neceſſary it is at preſent to diſtin-

diſtinguiſh between the Perfection, and the Happineſs of Man. Since the latter includes in it not only the Pleaſures proper to him ſimply as an intelligent, but alſo as an animal and ſenſitive Creature.

V. The Senſations, indeed, of Man in this latter Reſpect, are in ſome Caſes ſo violent and affecting, that ſome have thought it difficult to reconcile them with the *Wiſdom* and Holineſs of Providence; as thinking them more than an Over-ballance for the Power and Prerogative of Reaſon. But this Argument, upon due Inquiry, will appear to be grounded upon a falſe Judgment, and to owe its Riſe, not to any invincible Defect, either of human Underſtanding or Will, but to a Neglect and Abuſe of them. How forcible ſoever the Action of ſenſible

ſible Objects may be upon us, if we will make a due Uſe of the Light of our Mind, or the Freedom of our Will, we are both ſufficiently qualified to diſcover what way we ought to take, and enabled to proceed in it. Had ſenſible Objects, indeed, leſs Power to move us, it might be queſtioned, whether the End of God, in making Man Part of the ſenſible World, would be ſufficiently attained. There are certain Actions proper to the animal Life, and neceſſary to preſerve it, to which, were it not for the agreeable and ſtrong Senſations that accompany them, notwithſtanding the general Deſire which Men have of Living, they would yet be much more reluctant, if not, by Degrees, altogether averſe. Were Men to eat and drink, with

no

no other Intention, than meerly to ſupport Life, and without any Manner of Taſt or Reliſh, the Number of Perſons chargeable with deſtroying themſelves, if not, by a poſitive Choice, at leaſt, by an irregular uſe of their Liberty, would be much augmented: Nay, it is not improbable, that when the great Buſineſs, becauſe the great *Pleaſure* of Life, eating and drinking, ſhould no more ſubſiſt, ſome Men would even directly chuſe to be removed out of a State, wherein, according to their groſs Apprehenſions, they could find nothing to gratify or affect them. There are, indeed, natural Actions, which, were it not for the pleaſing Senſations, that attend them; or the painful, which Men feel when they are obſtructed, they ſhould be ſo far

far from an Inclination to perform, that they ſhould not, without much Difficulty and Trouble, be, on any other Account, reconciled to them. It is no Argument then againſt the Wiſdom and Holineſs of God, that he has given us certain powerful Senſations, on occaſion of material Objects acting upon us; ſince we have yet Strength ſufficient to oppoſe and reſiſt their Action, whenever it becomes irregular: but it is an Argument of the Wiſdom of God, that thoſe Senſations are of ſuch Force, as to anſwer the End, which otherwiſe they could not do, of his placing Mankind in this ſenſible World. And to ſhew how conſpicuous the divine Wiſdom is in this Appointment, in proportion as the ſenſible Actions of Life are more

neceſſary

neceſſary to the Preſervation of our ſenſible Being, they are attended ſtill with a more grateful and powerful Senſation; and this, indeed, is an evident Argument, they do not proceed from any fortuitous Conſtruction of the Body; but from the Diſpoſition of a wiſe and intelligent Cauſe.

VIII. I may farther obſerve, that were the Impreſſions of ſenſible Objects leſs ſtrong, the Ballance of Power between the intellectual and the ſenſible Part of us would be deſtroyed. Even in the preſent Diſpute, about the Right or Bounds of Empire between 'em, we find there are many Perſons ſo deſirous of improving the intellectual Part, that they are even willing to retire, ſo far as they can, out of the ſenſible World, in order to give themſelves up to Contemplation

templation and Prayèr, towards the greater Perfection of their Mind. This proceeds from the Idea they have formed, and *juſtly* formed, of the ſuperior Dignity and Excellency of the Soul. But could we ſee, in a ſimple and naked View, the Soul, with all the Powers and Capacities of it; and thoſe, exerting themſelves, or in a preparative State towards exerting themſelves, with all their Force, upon Objects proportioned to them, the Buſineſs of this Life, about which we are now ſo ſollicitous, would ſcarce be thought to deſerve the leaſt Part of our Care or Regard. Our Converſation would be wholly *in Heaven*, or upon heavenly Objects; and many of the Ends, for which God has placed us in this middle State, would conſequently be fruſtrated;

ſtrated; yet, for the Sake of which, tho' we know there is a Principle within us diſtinct from Matter, and ſuperior to all the Powers and Capacities of Matter, God has not thought fit we ſhould, at preſent, know, by a clear and diſtinct View, what that Principle is; becauſe (I ſhall make no Apology for repeating the Argument) could we ſee this bright and excellent *Form* expoſed to the Underſtanding, as we diſcover ſenſible Beauties by the ſenſible Eye, we ſhould be ſo much tranſported and overcome with the Viſion, that it would be extreamly difficult for us, without offering great Violence to ourſelves, to turn our Thoughts upon ſo foreign, and, in Compariſon, ſo ignoble and vile an Object as Matter, or any particular Part

of

of it, whereof this viſible World is compoſed. If a great Mind, by reflecting upon the Operations and Powers of the Soul, is now ſometimes able under the ſtrong Impreſſions of Senſe, and all the ſplendid Appearances, which Men call worldly Glory, to withdraw itſelf into the intellectual Syſtem; How little, how contemptible, would all the Pomps appear, which Art or Luxury can prepare, in the Eyes of one, who could ſee the Soul ſhine forth, like the Sun from under a dark Cloud, or rather after a total Eclipſe, in its full Strength and Luſtre?

IX. As this Conſideration ſhews, there are wiſe Reaſons, why we do not now know any thing more diſtinctly concerning the Nature of the Soul; ſo it diſcovers, that on Account of the Ballance of

Power between the Soul and the Body, proportioned to our preſent State, it is requiſite, the Happineſs, and the Perfection of Man, in regard to his End, ſhould be diſtinctly conſidered.

CHAP. III.

Of the End of Man conſidered more particularly in reſpect to his Perfection.

I. *That we naturally deſire Perfection, from a Motive of Self-love.* II, III. *Certain Degrees of Perfection in Things without Life, in Plants, and Animals.* IV. *Yet the Degrees of Perfection in other Things more eſpecially*

eſpecially eſtimated, as we are more intereſted in them. V. *The Deſire of Perfection, tho' it may be conſidered ſeparately, yet is really inſeparable from the invincible Deſire of Happineſs.* VI. *The Force and Extent of this Deſire.* VII. *Wherein the Perfection of any Being properly conſiſts.* VIII, IX. *In particular of Man.* X. *The Force of Contemplation in ſome Men.* XI. *Concerning human Will.* XII. *The main Queſtion upon the Subject to be reſolved in the next Chapter.*

AN obvious Reaſon may be aſſigned, why every Being ought to deſire its own Perfection; for the great Principle, common to all Beings, is *Self-love*: That, which puts them in Motion, which re-

regulates all their Actions, and cauſes them to take greater Complacency both in what they are, and in what they do. When any Being, capable of Reflection, conſiders itſelf, as having in the Rank, wherein it is placed, all the Qualities proper to the Nature of it, and which capacitate it for acting after a ſuitable Manner; the Pleaſure, ariſing from ſuch a Reflection, is not to be conſidered as proceeding from an irregular Motion of Pride, but from a generous and laudable Ambition of *Excelling*, founded in this eſſential Principle of Self-love. And if, from this *Motive*, it be lawful for intelligent Beings, on any Account, to take Complacency in themſelves, it is certainly not only lawful, but highly requiſite on Account of

thoſe ſuperior Advantages, which really tend to give them a greater intrinſick Value; and, at the ſame time, if they are Parts or Members of Society, juſtly render them more valued, and eſteemed by others.

II. Even Things inanimate are preferred and admired, according as they are more perfect or beautiful in their different Kinds. A Diamond riſes in the Price proportionably as it has a greater Luſtre, a finer Water, or as no Cloud or Flaw is diſcoverable in it. And the Judgment, we make, concerning the Excellency or Beauty of ſuch a Stone, is not founded in human Compact, or common Opinion, but in the intrinſick Reaſon of the Thing. Men may, indeed, agree to ſet a greater or a leſs extrinſick Va-

lue, at different Times, or in different Places, upon a Diamond; but without regard to other Advantages which might be made of it, a Man, who ſhould merely conſider it as a curious radiant and beautiful Production of Nature, pleaſing to the Eye, would truly judge it, on that very Account, preferable to a common Peble.

III. The ſame Obſervation may be extended both to the vegetable Kind, and to Animals, antecedently to all Cuſtom, or any popular Opinion: We ſhould judge a Flower, in its full Bloom, of a bright lively Colour, and a fragrant Smell, more perfect than another Flower, without theſe Qualities, or any of them. A Horſe of a fine Shape, and good Spirit, is more excellent in his

his Kind; whether we ſhould propoſe to make any Uſe of him, or not.

IV. Such Judgments are all founded on the general Principle, that every thing is more valuable in Proportion, as it is in itſelf more perfect; and ſuppoſe the Deſire of Perfection a natural and neceſſary Conſequence of that Love, which every Creature bears to itſelf; for the Reaſon, whereby we are excited to Love, or take Complacency in Things, wherein we have no immediate Intereſt, according to their different Degrees of Perfection, muſt certainly operate much ſtronger when any thing directly and *perſonally* affects us.

V. Every intelligent Being in particular ought to deſire its Perfection on this Account, that the

more perfect it is, it will in Proportion be more happy. Now it is only from a Deſire of being happy, that a Subſtance capable of Reflection would deſire to be at all. Happineſs, therefore, tho' for the Reaſon before mentioned, I am to conſider it diſtinctly from the Perfection of Man, yet is the Center to which he is carried by an invincible and uninterrupted Motion. When he placeth his Happineſs, as he often doth, in Things highly pernicious and deſtructive to him, yet he even then *blindly* follows this Law, and cannot, indeed, do otherwiſe: His End is the ſame, tho' he miſtakes his Way, and goes, perhaps, not ſo much *beſides*, as directly contrary to it. A Traveller over-taken in his Journey by the Night, or encompaſſed

paſſed in ſome thick Fog, not knowing what Path to purſue, or having no Guide, ſometimes fancieth he is going directly to the Place for which he deſigns, and where his fixed, and habitual Intention is to arrive, at the ſame Time, every Step he takes is a farther Remove from it.

The Deſire of Happineſs, therefore, does inceſſantly poſſeſs all intelligent Beings; tho' Man often miſtaking Appearances for Reality, directly flies from his true Happineſs, even while he imagines himſelf in full Purſuit of it; yet, tho' he is carried at different Times, and by different Motions, to his End, his Deſign of finding Happineſs, in the Purſuit, is *neceſſarily* and always the ſame.

VI. Now for the ſame Reaſon, Man deſires to be happy, and to be

be *always* happy, he desires to be happy to the utmost *Extent* of his Capacities, and to attain all those Degrees of Happiness, for which the Order, wherein he is placed, may qualify or entitle him. If Happiness be a *Good*, a greater Happiness must necessarily be a greater Good, and is still more to be desired. This is so evident, it needs no Proof. I am only to observe here, what Use may be made of it, in respect to that End of Man, we are considering more particularly in this Place.

VII. The Perfection of every Being consists in having those Powers and Faculties, which are proper to it, rightly disposed or informed; and then, in its acting pursuant to such a Disposition: And the nobler such Faculties are,

are, a Being endowed with them, is in the ſame Degree of a ſuperior and more excellent Kind.

VIII. All that remains then, at preſent, to be done, is to conſider, what in particular thoſe Faculties of Man are, which are proper to him, eſpecially which diſtinguiſh him from other Creatures; and wherein his Superiority, ſo far as he may really be, in certain Reſpects, ſuperior to them, is ſuppoſed to conſiſt?

IX. Now the two principal Faculties of Man, for theſe, without deſcending to any other, will be ſufficient to anſwer the End of our preſent Enquiry, are *Underſtanding* and *Will*.

Firſt, we find a Capacity in ourſelves of diſcovering certain Objects, of comparing them together, of obſerving an Agreement

or

or Diſagreement, an Equality or Inequality between them, and then, of inferring certain Concluſions upon which we are able to diſcover many Truths relating to them. And as all our natural Capacities, when exerted *on* their proper Objects, are rewarded with a certain Degree of Pleaſure; ſo in the ſeveral Employments of our intellectual Faculties, eſpecially in the Diſcovery of Truth, we experience not only an eaſy State of Mind, anſwering to that of natural Bodies, when they are in their proper Places, and at Reſt: But a *real* Delight and Satisfaction, anſwering to that, which the ſenſible Eye is apprehended to take, in ſeeing any beautiful Work of Nature or Art, in a good and proper Light.

X. Con-

X. Contemplative Men, indeed, are ſometimes tranſported with the Diſcovery of Truth to ſuch a Degree, eſpecially ſome Truth of great Uſe and Importance to themſelves or others, and which they have found after long Attention, and many deep Reſearches, that they are carried, as it were, above themſelves, or rather like ſimple Intelligences *out* of themſelves, in ſuch a Manner, that for the time they can ſcarce tell whether they are *in the* Body, or *out of the* Body; a radiant Light diffuſes itſelf upon their Minds, which cannot be expreſſed, and which gives them an exalted Pleaſure, the World cannot give; a pure intellectual Pleaſure, and by ſo much more affecting, as being more free from the confuſed Noiſe

Noiſe of the Senſes, Imagination, and Paſſions.

11. Man finds in himſelf another Capacity of *willing* or chuſing. As by the Light of his Underſtanding he diſcovers ſeveral Objects with their reſpective Properties and Relations, and thereupon judges, upon which of them he ought principally to employ his Meditations; ſo the Exerciſe and Uſe of his Will conſiſts in the *Choice* of thoſe Things which are moſt worthy to be choſen. According, therefore, as his *Will* is regulated by his Underſtanding, and employed about ſuch Things, as are in their own Nature more *eligible* or deſerving his Choice, he conſequently arrives to a higher Degree of Perfection, in reſpect to this Faculty; and is, for the ſame Reaſon, more happy:

happy: For it is a moſt clear and obvious Truth, that every Being is in Proportion both more perfect and happy, as the proper Faculties of it are more converſant about ſuch Things, which are agreeable to the Nature and Operations of them.

12. This is ſufficient to ſhew wherein the Perfection of Man does principally conſiſt; why he naturally deſires Perfection; and, by neceſſary Inference, the Means which lead to his Perfection. But the main Queſtion, indeed, lies here, What is the *Rule* of *Perfection* to Man in relation to both theſe Faculties? For it will be to little Purpoſe to diſcover, that Man deſires his own Perfection, and is capable, in the proper Uſe of his natural Powers, of attaining it, except he be

be alſo directed in the Uſe of them, or have ſome Method preſcribed to him, how he ought to purſue his End, and by what means his Perfection may be *actually* attained.

CHAP. IV.

What the Rule of Perfection to Man is?

I. *He is to conſult Truth in order to regulate his Judgment.* II, III. *And the moral Attributes of the moſt wiſe and perfect Agent, in order both to regulate his Action,* IV. *and to direct his Intention.*

I. The

THE firſt Enquiry will be concerning the Rule of Perfection to Man, in reſpect to his End, conſidered as an *intelligent* Being; and under this Notion, as he finds, by an internal Conſciouſneſs, that Truth is the proper Object of his Underſtanding; and that he is capable, in a certain Degree, of diſcovering it, and taſtes a ſenſible Pleaſure in the Diſcovery; the Conſequence is, that he ought both to regulate and determine all his Judgments by ſuch Diſcoveries; for, otherwiſe, he could have no End, no End tending to his Perfection, in making them.

2. But tho' Truth, abſtractedly conſidered, has ſomething in it, which tends to the Perfection of human Mind; yet as Man is

an intelligent Being formed for *Action*, and of an active Diſpoſition, it principally concerns him to underſtand ſuch Truths, whereby his Action, as an *intelligent* Being, ought to be regulated.

III. Here then lies the main Difficulty, by what *Rule* Man ought to conduct himſelf as an *intelligent* Agent? For the Reſolution of which the true Rule certainly is, that he ſhould conſult the Idea of the moſt *perfect* of all intelligent Agents, and diſcover, if he can, by contemplating the Perfections of his Nature, what they ſeverally are, and how they may be applied to ſerve him, as *Models* for the Regulation of his own Conduct. For what is moſt perfect, in its Kind, ought to be propoſed as the Rule and Standard to all other Things

of

of the like Kind; and the more they participate of the Nature or Qualities of ſuch an Original, or bear the near Reſemblance to it, they are, in the ſame Degree, neceſſarily more perfect.

Now if we conſult the Idea of the moſt perfect intelligent Being, we ſhall find included in that Idea, that he always acts as Reaſon directs; and, that one of the prime Directions of Reaſon is, that every Action ought to be conducted, by a certain Order, to certain wiſe and good Ends: For otherwiſe, contrary to the preſent Suppoſition of an all-perfect Being, there might be manifeſt Tokens of Imperfection, in theſe ſeveral Reſpects. An Action, for Inſtance, which is not regularly conducted, cannot ſo ſoon attain its End, if it ſhould

at length attain it, as an Action which tends directly, and without any deviation, or obſtacle, to it. And for this Reaſon, the great Genius Mr. *Malibranch* has demonſtrated, that God having once determined to create the material World, to put Matter in motion, and to conſtitute certain Laws whereby it ſhould move, did eſtabliſh this as the primary Law of Motion, that every Particle of Matter ſhould have a Tendency to move in a direct Line; for otherwiſe the ſupreme Being, who does nothing in vain, and never employs his Power, where there is no Occaſion, would yet make Uſe of a greater Degree of Power than was needful, and conſequently of a *ſuperfluous* Action; it being evident, that a leſs Force will carry any Body towards

towards its Center, or proper Place, in a direct, than in an oblique or crooked Line. And if there be ſo much Beauty and Reaſon in obſerving a certain Order in the Formation and Direction of Things inanimate; the Neceſſity of Order will appear much greater, in Proportion, as the Things wherein it is ſought or required, is of a ſuperior and more excellent Nature.

IV. We ſhall no leſs eaſily diſcover that, as the moſt perfect Being acts according to a certain Order; ſo his Action is always conducted to very wiſe and good Ends. And if Wiſdom and Goodneſs are not Perfections, there is no arguing, in any Caſe, from the moſt clear, the moſt univerſal, and inconteſted Notions, that Men can have of Things.

CHAP. V.

Whence an Obligation of conforming to this Rule ariſeth.

I. *The Rule of Action to Man immutable.* II. *Confirmed by the Authority of* Cicero *and* Ariſtotle. III. *More particularly of* Ariſtotle. IV. *The Rule of Action to Man compared with that of other Creatures.* V. *A Difficulty which may ariſe.* VI. *Obviated.* VII. *Eſpecially from a Proſpect of future Rewards and Puniſhments.* VIII. *A future State of Rewards and Puniſhments demonſtrated.* IX. *After a Manner*

Manner that cannot be diſputed by thoſe, who believe the moral Perfections of the divine Nature. X. *Another Objection propoſed and,* XI. *anſwered.* XII. *The great Advantages to Men in following this Rule.*

I. THE Rule, concerning which I am now ſpeaking, is the Rule of Order. A Rule that directs us to compare Things together, to obſerve their ſeveral Relations, Powers and Properties; and from the Judgment we make of them, to employ the moſt proper Means towards attaining our End. So that the Law of *Order*, is only another Appellation for the Law of *Reaſon*; for ſuppoſing a reaſonable Being to act, if we intend any thing by

Reaſon, or if Reaſon is of any Uſe to ſuch a Being, the proper Office of it will conſiſt in adviſing him to chuſe the *neareſt* and *beſt* way to his End. It is impoſſible, indeed, to conceive of what good uſe Reaſon can be to a Man, except by enabling him to judge when he lays Things together, and examines their different Qualities, whether he ought to prefer or reject them; whether they are really beneficial or injurious to him; otherwiſe his Underſtanding inſtead of being attended with thoſe Privileges, with which the Author of Nature deſigned he ſhould be diſtinguiſhed, might rather prove the Occaſion of his greater Error or Prejudice; as tending, in frequent Inſtances, to miſlead and carry him ſtill farther from his proper End.

II. And

II. And therefore *Cicero* defines the moral Law, or the Law of Nature, to be "right Reaſon, agreeable to the natural Conſtitution "of Man, diffuſed as a common "Principle, through all human "Race, uniform, and of perpetual "Force." *Vera Ratio, naturæ Congruens, diffuſa in omnes, Conſtans, perpetua.* De Republ. Conſonant to which Definition is that of *Ariſtotle*, who calls the Law of Nature immutable, and of the ſame Operation and Effect every where; like that of Fire, *ſaith he*, ſpeaking of his native Country, which burns here, and in *Perſia*. Τὸ μὲν φύσει ἀκίνητον, καὶ πανταχοῦ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει δύναμιν, ὥσπερ τὸ πῦρ, καὶ ἐνθάδε, καὶ ἐν Περσαῖς, καίει. Chriſt. Ethe.

III. In the Judgment of this Philoſopher, as inanimate Beings move and act in vertue of certain

tain Laws agreeable to their Nature; and, as they are in their proper and natural State, when ſuch Laws are obeyed, which *they* conſtantly do obey, if not obſtructed in their Operations by ſome foreign ſuperior Force; ſo Man, if he were to follow the proper Bent and Tendency of human Nature, or to conduct himſelf, by the ſtanding Law of it, the *Law* of Order and Reaſon, would always act, as all other Beings, both animate and inanimate are obſerved to do, in a regular, conſtant, and uniform Manner.

IV. What I intend is, that as the Rule of all natural Agents to move and act, according to the ſeveral Powers and Qualities impreſſed on them, by the Author of Nature: As the Rule to ſenſible

ſible Beings is to purſue ſuch Things, as tend to the Preſervation and Support of the ſenſible Life: So the Rule to Man is to follow that Reaſon, which diſtinguiſheth him * from other Creatures; and which he always would follow invincibly, as the *Direction* proper to him, were it not for a Power, he has of abuſing his Liberty; and which renders him, what no other Being upon Earth is, a proper Subject of Reward and Puniſhment.

5. If it be ſaid, this ſhews, indeed, what a Man has a natural Tendency to do; and what he *may* do; but yet does not appear fully to prove what he *ought* to do, or is under a ſtrict *Obligation* of performing. Reaſon may ſhew

* Separat hæc nos a Grege Brutorum. *Juv. Sat.* 15.

us the Way, it may direct, perſuade, and invite; but its Suggeſtions may want a binding and authoritative *Sanction*. It may perform the Office of a *Monitor*; But how does it therefore follow, that we are to obey it as a *Lawgiver*?

VI. In this Caſe we are to regulate our Judgments from the Ends, which the ſupreme Being had, in making Man a reaſonable Agent. For I here argue not againſt Atheiſts, but upon Suppoſition of ſuch a Being. Now we ſhall never be able to diſcover how an all-perfect Being could have any other End in making Man a *reaſonable* Agent; but that he ſhould act according to Reaſon. We may as naturally ſuppoſe, God ſhould impreſs a Tendency in Bodies towards their proper

proper Center without any Intention, that they ſhould move according to ſuch Impreſſion; as that he ſhould endow Man with Reaſon, without intending he ſhould follow Reaſon. And if God had ſuch an Intention, there can be no Diſpute, but as he always proportions the Means to the Ends deſigned by him, ſo he has enforced the Law of Reaſon after ſuch a Manner, as to render it *ſtrictly* obligatory: For otherwiſe, we ſhould be under a Neceſſity of ſuppoſing, that a Being of infinite Wiſdom had propoſed an End to himſelf, without taking competent Care, that ſuch End might be attained. Since, according to the preſent State and Situation of Man, a Law to him, which is not enforced by proper Sanctions, either

penal

penal or remunerative, will never be of ſufficient Force to contain him within the Bounds of his Duty.

VII. It is not neceſſary Rewards or Puniſhments to Man ſhould be diſtinctly, or expreſly ſpecified, or that, in this preſent Life, God ſhould always immediately make *himſelf known by the Judgment which he executeth*; it is ſufficient, if we know, that, in the Reaſon of the Thing, the Supreme Law-giver ought to be obeyed; and that the Ends of Government require, Diſobedience to his Laws ſhould be puniſhed; and if he does not, therefore, immediately proceed to puniſh the Diſobedient in this Life, it is becauſe there is another State, wherein he will vindicate the Honour and Authority

thority of his Laws, from the Contempt which is now done to them.

I will add, that without ſuppoſing a future State of Retribution, it will be impoſſible to account for the Wiſdom of God, in making Reaſon the Law to Mankind of their Actions. Since this would be evidently, to make a Law, without giving that obliging Force to it, which is neceſſary, *abſolutely* neceſſary, to make it operate.

VIII. Seeing then, what I conceive will not be diſputed, the Motives to obey the Law of Reaſon, or the Law of God, are not, in all Caſes, if we confine our Views within the Compaſs of this Life, ſufficient to enforce Obedience; it follows, undeniably, that there is another Life, wherein

wherein we are to account our tranſgreſſing that Law in this preſent Life: This, indeed, is a moſt neceſſary Conſequence, on Suppoſition God governs the World as a *wiſe Legiſlator*; as a Legiſlator, who propoſes his Laws ſhould be obeyed.

IX. This is ſo clear and full a Demonſtration, concerning a future State of Retribution to Mankind, that I ſhould be much ſooner inclined to queſtion, Whether, at preſent, I am united to a Body, than whether, after this Life, I ſhall be judged for the Things now *done in the Body*? How far the Power of God may extend towards giving me Senſations of Things that are not, I cannot tell; neither is it of any Importance to Religion

ligion, or Morality, to determine this Point; the Ends of both being equally anſwered on Suppoſition, either of a *material*, or ſimply of an *ideal* World; if the latter Suppoſition do not rather render the Work of an Omnipotent Agent more ſtupendous and admirable. But, on the other Hand, if we may err in the cleareſt Deductions, we can make from a Conſideration of the Wiſdom, and other moral Attributes of God, there is an End of all our reaſoning, at once, upon religious, and moral Subjects.

X. It ſeems to be a Queſtion of much greater Difficulty, That, ſuppoſing the Law of Reaſon, an obligatory Law of human Actions, how does it appear to us, in all Caſes,

what Reaſon really is? Or by what Marks, or Characters of Diſtinction ſhall we know, when we are directed by Reaſon? Reaſon, *on* this Account, has been compared with Quick-ſilver running out of a Box, which is carried with an indetermined Motion, this way and that way, without fixing any where; or to the changeable Colours of a Dove's Neck, which appear different to thoſe who are at a greater, or leſs Diſtance, or ſtand in a different Light. And to ſhew, farther, how imperfect our Reaſonings are, we are told, what have been the different Opinions of Philoſophers; different Cuſtoms of Nations; and even different Laws, as Circumſtances have happened to vary, of the ſame Nation.

XI. This

XI. This is an Objection, which ought to be removed. The latter Branch of it will be conſidered afterwards: In reſpect to the Queſtion, What Reaſon, or the Rule of our Conduct really is? I have already laid down a general Rule; that we ſhould conſult the original Reaſon, the Model of all reaſonable Beings; whoſe Reaſon, as it is a Law to himſelf, and which he invincibly follows, ought, ſo far as we are able to diſcover it, to be a Rule of Action to us. Now the Light of Reaſon, when we conſult it, will clearly diſcover to us, that whenever the All-perfect Being deſigns to act, he propoſes to himſelf an End worthy of his Action; an End worthy to be attained by the moſt regular and ſimple

Means; a good and a beneficial End; an End, either reſpecting his own, or what neceſſarily depends on him, the Happineſs of his Creatures. Whenever, therefore, in Imitation of this All-perfect Being, we would regulate our Judgments concerning the reaſonableneſs of what we propoſe to do, let us examine it, by the Order of his Conduct; let us conſider what, and why, we work; let us obſerve in our Work an exact Meaſure and Proportion; let us inquire what is worthy of ourſelves, and moſt beneficial to others: This is a Rule in the Application of which we cannot eaſily miſtake.

XII. But ſhould we happen to miſtake, our Error, as proceeding from ſome Defect of Underſtanding, rather than of Will,

Will, would be more excuſable; however, we can never be in great Danger, (if we only put the Queſtion to ourſelves, What Order, in any Caſe, requires to be done,) of Erring, in any eſſential Point of Duty; this is a Rule always at Hand; and, *Simple* as it is, if we would conſtantly attend to it, as the Voice of Nature, the Oracle of God ſpeaking continually to us, and within us, we ſhould find it of infinite, and moſt excellent Uſe; and, I will be bold to affirm, worth all other Caſuiſts in the World beſides, for the Direction of our Conſcience.

CHAP. VI.

Whether the foregoing Rule is of ſufficient Extent to regulate our moral Conduct?

I. *The Grounds upon which this Queſtion is propoſed.* II. *In what Senſe the divine Perfections are imitable by us?* III. *The Reaſons of our imitating them are not deſtroyed by the Diſtinction between a Dependent, and an Independent Being.* IV, V. *Neither is the Morality of ſuch Actions hereby deſtroyed, that are properly Human; and, which, as*

as implying Imperfection, have not directly any exemplary *Idea in the divine Nature!*

I. THE Reaſon of this Inquiry, whether the foregoing Rule be an *adequate* Rule to Man, as a moral Agent, ariſes from hence; that God, as the Soveraign, Almighty, and Independent Being, muſt neceſſarily conduct himſelf, by other Meaſures, than Man, liable to many Wants, and much Weakneſs; in a State of Subjection and Dependance, not only on the Soveraign Being, but, in many Reſpects, on his fellow Creatures, with whom he co-habits. Theſe different Conditions, it may be ſuppoſed, will neceſſarily occaſion, and require, a different Rule of Conduct.

II. This Difficulty will be eaſily removed, if we conſider, that, when God is propoſed as the *Exemplary* Object of Imitation to Man; he is propoſed under that Conſideration, not as a Being of abſolute and deſpotick *Power*, or with reſpect to his incommunicable Attributes; but as a wiſe, good, juſt, and merciful Being; as a Being endowed with thoſe moral Attributes, which are neceſſarily included in the Idea of a Being infinitely perfect; becauſe the Want of them would neceſſarily imply ſome great Defect, and could only proceed from it. Even the divine Power itſelf, irreſiſtable and unlimited as it is, abſolutely conſidered, yet, whenever God proceeds to exert it, is always regulated in the Operations of it, by theſe Attributes

tributes; having no ſuperior Law to direct or reſtrain his Action; God is a Law to himſelf; that is, the Perfections of his own Nature, are a Rule to him of his Conduct; from which he can no more depart than he can oppoſe his own Action, or *deny himſelf*; for he never worketh, merely becauſe he *will* work, or antecedently to any *wiſe*, good, or reaſonable End of his working, but according to the *Counſel of his Will*; that is, after ſuch a Manner, or for ſuch Ends, as infinite Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Mercy, or other *moral* Conſiderations may direct.

III. Tho' a ſenſible Difference does therefore ariſe between the Duties of Man, as a dependent created Being, and the Conduct of the ſupreme God; the Creator,

Creator, and the Fountain of all Power; yet the general Reaſon of our imitating him, in thoſe Perfections of his Nature, which are, in any Degree imitable by us, does ſtill hold good; and obligeth us, as we are Creatures, to conduct ourſelves in that Relation, as Reaſon and Order require we ſhould do; and according to which the uncreated Being himſelf conſtantly regulates his own Actions; for he always does what in reſpect to his own State, or the Relation, wherein he ſtands to his Creatures, does require, he ſhould do.

IV. By following Reaſon and Order, we may be ſaid then, in a Senſe, to be *Imitators* of *God*, even while we are exerciſing certain Virtues, of which his Sovereignty and the abſolute Perfection

tion of his Nature render him incapable; and tho' an Obligation to them wholly ariſeth from our preſent imperfect and *dependent* State.

V. So that as to thoſe moral Virtues of *Sobriety*, *Chaſtity*, and *Humility*, ariſing from the preſent Union of the Soul to the Body, and from our Dependance on other Men, or our Commerce with them, which are properly human, or ſocial Duties, and cannot be aſcribed to a Being of infinite Perfection; (for we cannot directly argue from the Idea of ſuch a Being, that thoſe Things are morally good, which are not included in his Idea:) The Anſwer is, tho' we cannot argue directly, in ſuch a Way, yet to be ſober, and chaſte, and humble, is highly agreeable to our preſent State

State and Condition; and, therefore, tho' We do not find in the Idea of an all-perfect Being, and for that very Reaſon becauſe he is all-perfect, any Attributes directly correſponding to theſe Duties; yet the general Reaſon for the Morality of them ſtill holds good; we ought to render ourſelves as perfect, and, for that Reaſon, to approach as near to God as poſſible: Theſe Duties are proper Means of perfecting our Nature, and of bringing us nearer to God; therefore they muſt be ſuppoſed to have an intrinſick, which is what we underſtand by a *moral* Goodneſs in them.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Concerning the End of Man in reſpect to his Happineſs.

I. *The Oppoſition between human Happineſs and Perfection.* II. *The Reaſon of it.* III. *A Queſtion ariſing from the Conflict between the Soul and the Body.* IV, V. *More eaſily anſwered, on Suppoſition of a future State.* VI. *What Reaſon directs upon that View.* VII. *The Error of the* Stoicks *concerning Pain.* VIII. *Of heroick Virtue.* IX. *The Error of the* Epicureans *concerning Pleaſure.* X. *Yet the Argument,*

ment, from the Conveniency of the moral Law, concludes with greater Force againſt the Stoicks.

I. I HAVE already obſerved, that the Happineſs of Man, on Account of his preſent State, may be conſidered as diſtinct from his *Perfection*; becauſe we often find ourſelves ſenſibly pleaſed, and, by conſequence, really and actually happy, even in the Enjoyment of thoſe things which oppoſe our Perfection. For Pleaſure and Happineſs are ſo inſeparable, that they neceſſarily infer one another, and cannot be ſuppoſed to ſubſiſt apart.

II. The Reaſon of this Oppoſition between our preſent Happineſs, and our Perfection, ariſes from the Union of Soul and Body, and

and the preſent Laws of Communication between them. We are placed in a kind of middle State between two Worlds, *Heaven* and *Earth*; the Body is of the Earth, *earthy*, and always tending to the Earth, as to its proper Center. The Soul being of nobler and ſpiritual Extraction, is, in the Nature of it, apt for the Contemplation and Enjoyment of ſpiritual Objects; but, as it receives, by reaſon of its Union with the Body, painful or pleaſing Senſations, according to the good or ill State of the Body; ſo there is a Neceſſity it ſhould do ſo, for the Preſervation of that Part; for were it not for ſuch pleaſing or painful Senſations, the Body would be treated with great Neglect, if not with ſuch an open Contempt, as would ſoon occaſion its Death and Diſſolution

Diſſolution. But the Soul feeling theſe Pains or Pleaſures continually, does, by Degrees, ſuffer herſelf to be poſſeſſed by them, even to the Neglect of her own Perfection. The Reaſon, whereof, having been aſſigned before, I ſhall not repeat it. It is ſufficient to my preſent Purpoſe to obſerve, that the corruptible Body does, in Fact, *preſs down the incorruptible Soul:* That this noble Principle, which ought to command and give Laws to the Senſes, thoſe corrupt Inſtruments of the Body, is often enſlaved to them; that Reaſon quits the Throne to put theſe rebellious Subjects into it; and even ſometimes debaſes herſelf ſo far, as not only to excuſe, but to juſtify the Violence and Diſorders, whereof they are guilty: In ſhort, that there is a

Law

Law in the Members, warring againſt the Law in the Mind, and bringing Men into Captivity to the Law of Sin.

III. The Queſtion is, during this Conflict, or rather, as the Event ordinarily proves, under this ſuperior Force of the Body, whether it is not better for the Soul, as more conducing to her Eaſe and Happineſs, intirely to ſubmit; than to put herſelf continually to the Shame and Diſhonour of being defeated, through a fruitleſs and impotent Reſiſtance? And if, conſequently, the Order of Nature being thus inverted, it would not be more adviſeable to comply with what we cannot remedy, and wholly to lay ourſelves out in the Enjoyment of ſenſible Pleaſures, or towards procuring ſuch Things as

chiefly tend to the Preſervation of the ſenſible Life? For tho' our Perfection, ſuppoſing the Balance of Power, which the Soul ought to hold, could be in any competent Meaſure preſerved, might deſerve, at leaſt, an equal Regard; yet ſince ſhe has ſuffered herſelf to be ſo much debaſed and debilitated by the Weight of Concupiſcence, that her Empire cannot be re-eſtabliſhed, except Men will reſolve to relinquiſh their Eaſe, and their Intereſt, and thoſe Things wherein they principally place their Happineſs and Security; it deſerves to be conſidered, whether, in this Caſe, Reaſon will not rather direct them to ſacrifice their Perfection to their Happineſs, than their Happineſs to their Perfection?

IV. Were this Queſtion to be determined, without any Regard

to

to a future State, it would be more difficult to eſtabliſh the Diſtinction of moral Virtue, on account of the Tendency, which it has to promote our Happineſs. Becauſe it might frequently happen, that the Virtues of good Men, inſtead of rendring them happy, would here expoſe them, (for ſuch Inſtances are not uncommon) to much Trouble and Miſery; and, perhaps, even render them ſo unhappy, that, upon a due Eſtimate, the Benefits of Life would not be an equivalent Compenſation for the Evils which they have ſuffered.

V. In this Caſe, as the Deſire of Happineſs is invincible; as a Man would even ſooner deſire not to be, than not to be happy: It would be difficult to demonſtrate, that any Man could be obliged to prac-

tiſe the Duties of a ſtrict Morality: For that would ſuppoſe him obliged to do a Thing contrary to the prime and eſſential Inclination of human Nature; and, conſequently, to do an Action altogether unnatural. When we, therefore, reſolve the Obligation to moral Virtue into this Motive, that the Practice of it tends to the Happineſs, as well as to the Perfection of human Nature, and is a Law of preſent Conveniency; we proceed upon one, or both of theſe Suppoſitions; either that the Practice of moral Virtue, is, upon a general Conſideration, more conducing to Man's preſent Happineſs; tho' ſome extraordinary Caſes may occur to the contrary; or elſe, when ſuch extraordinary Caſes do occur, that which is deficient towards

wards attaining the great End of Man, *Happineſs* in this Life, ſhall be ſupplied in a future State.

VI. Upon this View, the Law of Morality is the Law of Reaſon; becauſe Reaſon will ever direct, that we ſhould poſtpone a preſent, to a future, certain, and much greater Convenience; or, that we ſhould chuſe to ſuffer a preſent Pain, to avoid a future, certain, and much greater Evil. I would not hereby inſinuate, as if, even with reſpect to this Life, the Advantages of Happineſs and Proſperity are not, generally ſpeaking, to be found on the ſide of moral Virtue; but I argue, admitting they ſhould not, we have yet a Demonſtration from the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, that, in

another Life, that Happineſs, which we here ſeek for in the Practice of a ſtrict Morality, will be found. Becauſe, otherwiſe, God would fail of his End in creating Man to be happy. As a *wiſe* God, therefore, *will* propoſe ſuch Means which are proper to attain his End; and as a *good* God can only propoſe a good End; it neceſſarily follows, that the End propoſed by God, not being, on the preſent Suppoſition, attainable in this Life; there is another State, wherein it will *certainly* be attained.

VII. There is no Neceſſity, therefore, of aſſerting with the Stoicks, that bodily Pain is not an Evil, nor bodily Pleaſure a Good; for whatever tends to make us uneaſy or miſerable, is naturally evil; as whatever tends to make

us

us happy, is, for that Reaſon, naturally good. The *Stoicks* were forced upon theſe Paradoxes, wherein they were confuted, both by Experience, and the Reaſon of the Thing; becauſe they held moral Virtue would neceſſarily render Men happy; and that the proper Diſtinction of it was founded in this Conſideration; whereas their wiſe and virtuous Man was often expoſed to external Evils. Their Principle was juſt in the main; but it does not follow, that, becauſe moral Virtue tends, in the Nature of it, to make us happy, that we ſhould, therefore, be always *actually* happy: 'Tis ſufficient, if the future Happineſs, to which moral Virtue entitles us, will more than over balance the preſent Evils, as it certainly

will do, to which it accidentally may expoſe us.

VIII. Men, indeed, of great and generous Minds may deſpiſe the Pleaſures of Senſe, or take Complacency in the Exerciſe of an heroick Virtue, tho' attended with Pain, and without Proſpect of Reward; becauſe Joy and Exultation of Mind are naturally conſequent to virtuous Actions. A Soul, conſcious of its innate Dignity, will have Strength ſufficient to ſurmount many Obſtacles; the *Spirit* of a *Man will ſuſtain his Infirmity*; but it will not always have Force enough to reſiſt Pleaſure, or *totally* to overcome Pain. It was a ſecret Pride, and an Affectation of Independency, that kept the Stoicks, many of which had yet refined Notions of Morality, in Countenance; for when

no Body was preſent, all their boaſted Wiſdom and Strength vaniſhed; juſt as Kings of the Stage, when the Curtain is drawn, ceaſe to act, and loſe all their Bravery and Grandeur in a Moment. It is not ſo with Believers, whoſe *Hopes are full of Immortality*, and who are as perfectly aſſured, that all the accidental Deficiencies in this Life will be made up to them in a future Life, as that there is a *wiſe*, a *juſt*, and a *good* God.

IX. The Error of the Epicureans conſiſted, on the other Hand, in their making preſent *Pleaſure* the Meaſure of human Happineſs. And becauſe Man is ſometimes ſenſible of Pleaſure, no leſs in vitious and irregular, than in virtuous Actions; if he is not, in certain Inſtances, more violently affected

affected with the former, therefore it has been commonly thought, that this Sect, by the very Principles of their Philoſophy, let looſe the Reins to all manner of Licentiouſneſs and Diſorder. Yet it muſt be acknowledged they argued upon reaſonable Grounds, in ſaying, that Pleaſure was good for them; as they were really convinced by an internal Senſation, that it contributed to make them happy. But they ought to have conſidered, that tranſient Pleaſures could not make them *always*, or ſolidly happy; and that the Pleaſures of the Mind were not only more laſting, but, in the Nature of them, more noble and generous, than thoſe of the Body; ſo that, even upon the Epicurean Hypotheſis, with thoſe, who argued regularly and

ſoberly

ſoberly from it, the true Happineſs of Man, without any future Proſpect, was granted to conſiſt in the Practice of moral Virtue. But, in reſpect to the Stoicks, the moral Law was ſtill, by a more evident Argument, the Law of Conveniency to Man; and, conſequently, the Law which right Reaſon would have preſcribed to him, had he been under no *poſitive* or expreſs Obligation to practiſe it.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

The preſent and future Rewards of moral Virtue, conſidered more diſtinctly.

I. *God intended the moral Law ſhould oblige.* II. *The Power of Conſcience.* III, IV. *Anſwer to what is objected againſt it from Prejudice and Cuſtom.* V, VI, VII. *The Reaſonableneſs of ſuppoſing ſuch a Principle, from the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of a wiſe Legiſlator.* VIII. *The Force of it in very wicked Men.* IX. *Obduracy of Heart, a judicial Effect of God's Diſpleaſure.* X.

X. *A flagrant Abſurdity would follow, admitting there were no certain Principle of Conſcience.* XI. *Of Shame, and* XII. *Of Impudence.* XIII. XIV. Puffendorf's *Opinion, concerning Shame, conſidered.* XV. XVI. *Two Ends of it aſſigned.* XVII, XVIII, XIX. *The moral Law conſidered, as a Law of Conveniency.* XX. *Very wicked Men, in their private Judgment, profeſs and eſteem Virtue.* XXI. *Of Honour and Eſteem, mentioned as the Rewards of Virtue.* XXII. *But not adequate.* XXIII. *Not neceſſary to know, diſtinctly, the Nature of future Rewards to Man.* XXIV. *Yet, in general, they will conſiſt in being adapted to the Faculties of the Mind.* XXV. *Whether*

ther the Reſurrection of the Body may be proved from natural Principles. XXVI. *Concerning future Puniſhments to wicked Men.* XXVII. XXVIII. *On what Accounts difficult to be conceived.* XXIX. *This no Objection againſt the Truth of them.* XXX. *A Paſſage cited from the* Art *of* Thinking, *concerning Senſations, anſwering to thoſe which are felt by occaſion of* material *Fire.*

I. THE Law of Reaſon is the Law of human Nature; and it is ſufficient to ſhew the obligatory Force of this Law, that it was intended to be obligatory by the Author of our Being. We ought to follow his Order in Making us, and in the Faculties

ties he hath given us, tho' he had annexed no conſequent Reward to our Obedience, nor threatned to puniſh our Diſorders. But as ſuch metaphyſical Conſiderations, how reaſonable ſoever in themſelves, would not have been forcible enough to reſtrain the Appetites, or Paſſions, of Men, ariſing from the Impreſſion of ſenſible Objects; God has enforced this Law, not only, as hath been above demonſtrated, by giving us the Aſſurance of a future State of Happineſs, or Miſery, according to our good and evil Actions in this Life, but even by the Sanction of preſent Rewards and Puniſhments; in both reſpects, as a Law-giver, *able to ſave and to deſtroy*; ſince his Authority would, otherways, be precarious. And theſe Rewards and Puniſh-

ments

ments may be conſidered, as affecting us either *internally*, or *externally*.

II. The Sanction to Man of internal Rewards or Puniſhments is from the Power and Judgment of Conſcience. For as we experience in ourſelves, when we follow Reaſon, and conform to Order, a ſecret Joy and Complacency of Mind, teſtifying an Approbation of what we have done; ſo, upon the Commiſſion of Sin, eſpecially, in any notorious Breach of our Duty, we naturally find the Mind full of Pain and Anguiſh; and cannot, therefore, but *condemn* ourſelves *in what we allow*. It is poſſible, indeed, Men, by a long Habit of ſinning, may ſtupify their Conſcience to ſuch a Degree, as to find no Remorſe for the moſt atrocious

trocious Crimes; as ſome People by taking repeated *Opiates* are not ſenſible, for the Time, of their ordinary and dangerous Effects. But we are to not judge, concerning the Nature, or proper Operation of Things, from what happens in particular Caſes, for which Reaſons, from an habitual Uſe of ſuch Things, may be aſſigned; but from ſuch Effects, as are moſt common, and natural; and wherewith, ſuppoſing the Subject in a proper Diſpoſition, they will, moſt probably be attended. Now, to judge whether a Perſon be in a right State, ſo as to be affected with the Force of Conſcience; we are not to conſider him as under the Power of any inveterate ſinful Habit, or Habits; but as acting, after a Manner, with ſuch Diſpoſitions, and upon ſuch

Principles as *are common to Men.*

III. I am ſenſible, ſome Perſons have endeavoured to account for the Force of Conſcience, upon other Principles than thoſe who repreſent it as a *Judge*, appointed by God to give Sentence in his Name; ſince he doth not interpoſe in the Government of Mankind by a viſible Authority. Whenever his Laws, which are written on the Tables of our Hearts in ſo legible a Character, that they need no expreſs Promulgation, are, at any time, diſobey'd, this Miniſter of God has a Power of calling Men to an Account, and is armed with Terror: On the other Hand, by vertue of the ſame Authority, He not only abſolves the Innocent, but diſpenſes proper Rewards for the

the Encouragement and *Praiſe* of *thoſe that do well.* There are Perſons, I ſay, who make Conſcience, inſtead of aſcribing it to ſo high and authoritative a Conſtitution, nothing but the Effect of thoſe early Prejudices, which Men imbibe in their Infancy; and wherein they are, afterwards, gradually confirmed by Cuſtom and Converſation.

IV. The Force of Prejudice and Cuſtom is, confeſſedly, very great. But we are not to conclude, that every Thing we have learned in our Infancy, or wherein we have afterwards conformed to common Opinion, is, therefore, wholly owing to Prejudice, or common Opinion. Children are early taught to believe there is a God; and they are confirmed

in this Belief, by the publick Profeſſion made of it, and the Worſhip daily paid to God: Does it, therefore follow, there is no God; or that the Belief of a God has no true or real Foundation? Is it not more natural to ſuppoſe Men do generally agree in this Belief, becauſe they have Reaſons for it, than that they mutually agree to deceive, and to be deceived, or only believe his Exiſtence, upon the mere ſcore of Cuſtom, againſt Reaſon? May we not argue after the ſame Manner, and upon the ſame Grounds, in reſpect to Conſcience; that Men are ſenſible of the Force of it, not becauſe it is generally ſaid and believed, there is ſuch a Thing; but Men generally believe

lieve the Truth of the Thing, becauſe it really ſubſiſts.

V. Suppoſing, indeed, a God, who made, and who governs Mankind, it is very reaſonable to conclude, that in the preſent Adminiſtration of his Government, he would not leave himſelf *without a Witneſs* or internal Monitor to Man; by attending to which, tho' he ſhould not hear God ſpeaking to him with an audible Voice; yet he would become bound to obey him, by attending to the Light of his own Mind, and the Reſponſes of inward Truth: The Authority of enacting ſuch a Law being the ſame, in the Nature and Reaſon of it, as if God had divulged it immediately by a Voice from Heaven.

VI. There is then a reaſonable Suppoſition from the Ends of God's Government, why He ſhould implant, in the Minds of Men, thoſe lively and tender Sentiments of Good and Evil, concerning which we are ſpeaking; ſo that where there ſhould be no poſitive or written Law, Men might be a Law to themſelves, *their own Conſciences bearing Witneſs, and their Thoughts, in the mean while, accuſing, or elſe excuſing, one another.* Now where natural, probable, and very uſeful Reaſons may be aſſigned for the Exiſtence of Things, it is very unreaſonable to aſcribe ſuch Things to Cauſes foreign to the Nature of them, and without which they may, therefore, be naturally ſuppoſed to exiſt.

VIII. Beſides

VIII. Beſides, if the Force of Conſcience were wholly owing to the Prejudices of Education, or popular Opinion, What is the Reaſon why Men of the greateſt Freedom of Thought, yet find themſelves ſo incapable of being diſabuſed, as to this Article? Why do they find it ſo difficult to ſtifle the Reproaches of Conſcience, as they can eaſily do other frightful Accounts of Spectres and Apparitions, which they learned in the Nurſery, or by reading romantique Stories, when, afterward, they come to reaſon, and reflect upon them. And yet it may be queſtioned, if, the moſt abandoned Wretch, in any Age, even, whether he believed a God, or not, could ever wholly, and at all times o-

vercome the Reluctance, or ſtifle the Remorſe of Conſcience.

IX. Perſons who are moſt obdurate, and inſenſible to all Impreſſions of Religion, have, commonly, their Intervals of Reflection; wherein God is repreſented to them with a Rod of Vengeance in his Hand; yet, ſuppoſing them really capable of extinguiſhing all Fear of his Wrath, ſuch a State of Inſenſibility ought not to be conſidered, merely, as a natural Effect of their ſinful Habits; but, as a judicial Puniſhment inflicted by God upon them: Who, as they did not like to retain him, or this viſible Character of his Power and Godhead, in their Knowledge, gave them up to a *reprobate* Mind.

X. Again,

X. Again, were the Power of Conſcience founded only on Prejudice, or popular Opinion; then, whenever a general Corruption of Principles or Manners is introduced, and Vice does become popular, Men would take the ſame inward Complacency in vicious Actions, as they now do in Actions, to which the Idea of Virtue is affixed. A Man, for Inſtance, who ſhould betray his Friend, his Truſt, or his Country, would, on this Suppoſition, than which Nothing can be more irrational or ſhocking, experience the like Satisfaction and Complacency of Mind in reflecting on his Infidelity, as good Men, now really experience, in doing beneficent, and generous Actions. Nay, the Performance of ſuch Actions, to a

Perſon

Perſon, who is ſuppoſed wholly to regulate his Judgment by the Practice and Sentiments of other People, ought to give him a ſenſible Pain and Uneaſineſs; ſuppoſing their Judgment ſo corrupted that they call Evil Good, and Good Evil.

XI. The Judgment which we make of our own Actions, a Judgment that cannot be eaſily bribed or eluded, has not only been urged as an Argument to enforce the Law of Nature, but even, antecedently, to any Conſideration of ſuch a Law, it is ſaid, a *conſcious* Shame ariſes, which diſcovers itſelf in the mechanical Diſpoſition of the Body; as preſaging that ſome Evil, at which Conſcience takes the Alarm, is approaching towards us. So careful has the wiſe Legiſla-

tor

tor been to ſecure our Innocence and Duty, by guarding the very Outworks, wherewith we are to defend them; and by giving us Notice of the Enemy's Approach, before we come to engage directly with him. So that when we happen to be ſurprized, which, after all our Caution, is ſometimes unavoidable, before Reaſon has ſufficient Time to collect her whole Strength; this inward Shame, or Modeſty, often ſupplieth the Place, and doth the Duty of it; and even, ſometimes, when we are violently tempted, or inclined to betray the *Succours which Reaſon offers*, Shame lays *Reſtraints* upon ingenuous Minds, which they cannot overcome without much Confuſion, and a very ſenſible Reluctance.

XII. So

XII. So powerful, indeed, is this Principle, (and for which Reaſon, we ſuppoſe it deſignedly implanted by the Author of Nature to enforce the Law of Nature) that one of the vileſt Characters, of a Perſon abandoned to all Manner of Vice and Diſhonour, is *Impudence*; and, accordingly, the Prophet, whom I here cite, not under that Character, but, as ſpeaking agreeably to the common Sentiments of Mankind, mentions it as a Sign of the moſt corrupt and incorrigible State of a *wicked* People, that *they are not aſhamed, neither do they bluſh.*

XIII. *Puffendorf* was ſo ſenſible, an Argument might be formed contrary to his Opinion, from this Principle of Shame, to prove the Diſtinction of moral Good

Good and Evil; that he hath particularly endeavoured to obviate the Conſequence we would draw from it: The Sum of what he ſays is, that a Senſe of Shame, diſcovering itſelf in the Air of the Face, or ſome other exterior Appearance, is only a mere phyſical Effect, proceeding, ſolely, from a phyſical Cauſe, and not from a *moral*; which he thinks it would be inconvenient to ſuppoſe. But where lies the Inconveniency in ſaying, that God may cauſe a different Movement or Fermentation of the Blood, upon the leaſt Apprehenſion of Danger to the Soul? Seeing the Body and the Soul reciprocally act upon one another, for their mutual Support, and Advantage. As the Soul takes ſo much Care of the Body, and of every Thing relating

relating to its Safety, Preſervation, and Eaſe; it is but reaſonable that the Body, in Return, in ſome few Inſtances at leaſt, ſhould be the *Occaſion*, ſince it cannot be a proper *Cauſe* of certain Sentiments in the Soul, neceſſary to prevent any Injury, or Diſorder, which may happen to her.

XIV. And, therefore, this Author himſelf, confeſſeth, how conſiſtently I do not here examine, that the all-wiſe Creator hath implanted this Affection of Shame in the Mind of Man, to be the Guard of his Virtue; and a Reſtraint upon him from all ſinful or irregular Appetites. Nay, he adds, it is probable, if it had not been the Intention of God, that Man ſhould conform his Actions to the divine Law, God

God would not have rendred him ſubject to this Paſſion of Shame; ſince without ſuch an Intention, no proper Uſe of Shame could be diſcovered.

XV. Neither is it of any Force to overthrow the moral Senſe of Shame, that it does not only ariſe from the Apprehenſion of a ſhameful or ſinful Action; but, frequently, on occaſion of other things, which have, confeſſedly, no moral Turpitude in them, yet whereby we may, on ſome Account, ſuffer in our Reputation. As we obſerve People, for Inſtance, frequently to bluſh, when any Thing happens to remind them of any natural Defect of Body, or of Mind; of their Poverty; their mean Appearance, or Extraction. Whence ſome have concluded, that Shame

Shame, is nothing, but a ſecret Motion of Self-love and *Pride*, the predominant Paſſion of human Nature, which makes him extremely apprehenſive, and puts the Body in a State proper to fortify his Apprehenſion under any injurious Treatment; or any Appearance of Diſreſpect, that may tend to impair his Eſteem in the World; for which Reaſon, it is further obſerved, that Perſons are principally affected with Shame, and diſcover the moſt ſenſible Marks of it, when conſcious to themſelves, they are chargeable by others with ſuch Things, as principally regard their Reputation; or which repreſent them acting in civil Life, out of their proper Character, or the Rules of common Decency.

Decency, or below the Dignity of their Station.

XVI. This only proves that an all-wiſe Architect, in forming Man, might ſo order the Conſtruction of his Work, as to ſerve two different Ends by the ſame Movements in it. As Shame proceeds from Self-love, or a natural Deſire of Eſteem, without any Regard to the Morality of our Actions, we may conſider it is a mere *phyſical* Effect; but as it is deſigned a *Monitor* to us, that we ſhould do Nothing really diſhonourable or unworthy in itſelf, tho' no human Eye ſhould ſee us, nor any Conſequence relating to our Commerce in the World, might affect us; it may be conſidered as having the Force of a moral Law to us, and to which God hereby

plainly ſignifies his Intention, that we ſhould conform.

XVII. Beſides this Enforcement of Morality from Conſcience and Shame: God has farther encouraged us to the Practice of moral Duties, by the natural Tendency they have to promote our preſent Happineſs; ſo that if all Men would agree to regulate their Behaviour by the moral Laws, nothing could be ſo inſtrumental, either to our private, or the publick Happineſs, tho' we ſhould conſider it, merely, as a Law of Conveniency.

XVIII. It is true, by Means of the Corruption which is in the World, through Luſt; the natural Courſe and Tendency of moral Virtue is much obſtructed, and often fails of its proper End.

But

But this is by accident, and not according to the primitive Will and Deſign of God in Making us reaſonable Beings, capable of rendring ourſelves, by a due Uſe of our Liberty, happy, at preſent, and hereafter.

XIX. This ſhews, that the Law of Nature, conſidered in itſelf, and in its proper Tendency, is the Law of Conveniency, and might generally be enforced, even here, from that Conſideration; becauſe all wiſe and reaſonable Perſons will conduct themſelves according to thoſe Meaſures, which *commonly*, and more directly, tend to their Happineſs, rather than by thoſe, which only ſucceed in particular Caſes, and by *accident*. However, tho' it is allowed ſuch Caſes, may happen, we ſtill affirm no Ar-

gument can be drawn from them, againſt the Truth of moral Virtue, as a Law of Conveniency; becauſe it is, upon an evident Reaſon, convenient, that a leſs Intereſt ſhould be ſacrificed to a greater; and whatever Inequalities there are in the Condition of wicked and good Men, in particular Caſes, at preſent, they ſhall be perfectly adjuſted at a proper Time: and the Proof, that they ſhall be ſo adjuſted, is as clear and evident as any Concluſions that can, in a ſtrict Way of Arguing, be drawn from the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God. And if we may miſtake in our Reaſonings upon theſe divine Attributes, and when our Reaſons are founded upon the moſt clear and diſtinct Ideas, which the Mind of Man is able to conceive of them: Should God condeſcend

ſcend to make a particular Declaration of any moral Duty to us; I do not ſee how we could, in this Caſe, certainly prove the Truth of ſuch a Declaration. For, were it not for theſe Attributes of Wiſdom and Goodneſs in God, we could have no Aſſurance, either concerning the Truth of our Faculties, or our Obligation to obey his Commands. All our Reaſonings, indeed, on the Subjects of Morality, whether relating to the natural Law, or to divine Inſtitution, depend on our having right Notions concerning theſe divine Perfections; and if we argue, juſtly, from them, we ſhall find no Difficulties, reſpecting the promiſcuous Diſtributions of Providence in this Life to wicked and good Men; but what may

eaſily be accounted for, without deſtroying the Notion of moral *Virtue*, as a Law of *Conveniency*, tending to promote our Happineſs.

XX. Another Argument, to prove the Truth of this Law, may be taken from the very Judgment of thoſe wicked Men themſelves, who, for the Sake of ſome preſent Advantage, are yet tempted to tranſgreſs it. Virtue, in its greateſt Diſtreſs, is ſtill amiable, and ſhines through all the Clouds which encompaſs it, with a beautiful and ſurpriſing Luſtre. She commands, Reſpect, and Veneration from thoſe who yet do not engage in her Service, or appear in her Retinue. There is no Man, how vicious ſoever, but, in his own Judgment, muſt eſteem a Perſon

of

of Honour and Probity, of Humanity and Piety, above one of a different Character, to whom he may, notwithſtanding, give more ſenſible Proofs of an external Regard, as being more neceſſary to his Deſigns and Intereſts; but notwithſtanding the external and fallacious Homage, which Men do pay to very wicked Perſons, who are capable of ſerving them, they commonly, in their Hearts, ſecretly deteſt and deſpiſe them, and are only reſtrained from ſhewing their Contempt by Conſiderations merely reſpecting themſelves.

XXI. *Honour*, therefore, and *Eſteem*, may be conſidered as farther Rewards, deſigned by Providence, to enforce moral Virtue in this Life. *Rewards*, indeed, more general, more laſt-

ing, and, equally diſpenſed, than thoſe which reſpect Man's temporal Proſperity, or Peace; tho' it may too, ſometimes, happen in a very corrupt Age, that Men ſhall be raiſed to the higheſt Dignities and Honours, by the moſt diſhonourable and unworthy Means, and, even, careſſed and applauded by great Numbers of mercenary Dependents, according to the Extent of *their* Power and Intereſts. But theſe accidental Deviations from the common Meaſure of what is truly great and honourable, being the Effect of a falſe Judgment, are only of a very ſhort and tranſient Duration. When the partial Reaſons, and ſiniſter Motives, upon which they were formed, ceaſe to operate, the World uſually judges, concern-

ing

ing the Character of ſuch Perſons, by other Rules, and ſees their Actions in a very different Light from that wherein Flattery or Intereſt before repreſented them. Now, as a vicious Character is uſually followed with Obloquy and Reproach; ſo Juſtice, one Time or other, is commonly done, (corrupt as the Judgments of the World ſometimes are) to the Memory of injured and diſtreſſed Virtue.

XXII. Still we ſay theſe Rewards, ordinarily annexed to the Obſervance, and theſe Puniſhments to the Breach of the natural Law, are not, univerſally, of Force ſufficient to bind Men to their Duty; and, as it is requiſite, that all Laws ſhould be enforced by Rewards and Puniſhments, the Hope, or Fear, of which,

which, reſpectively, may be ſtrong enough to ſecure Obedience to them: So that the future Evil ſhall be greater than the preſent Benefit of trangreſſing them, and the future Good greater then the preſent Inconveniency in Obeying; and, upon this Conſideration, in order to give the natural Law all the Force, which it ought to have, it is neceſſary we ſhould caſt our Eyes forward, upon the Rewards and Puniſhments of another Life.

XXII. It is not ſo neceſſary that we ſhould diſtinctly know the Kind, or Degree, of that Reward, or Happineſs, to which the Practice of pure Morality will entitle us; it is ſufficient that we know, by conſulting the Ideas of Wiſdom and Goodneſs,

in

in the Legiſlator, that the Reward will be ſuch, as it is proper for him to give, or for us to receive; a Reward worthy of the Pains and Labour, of all the Sufferings and Self-denial, we can exerciſe in Purſuit of it. *He that cometh unto God, muſt,* by his very *Acceſs, believe* both *that he is,* and that he is *a Rewarder of them who diligently ſeek him.* This is a Truth which I cite, not becauſe it is confirmed by a divine Authority, but becauſe it is evident from the clear and inconteſted Reaſon of it. And if God hath interpoſed to reward Man, as his Action always bears the Character of his Attributes, it will aſſuredly be a God-like, a great, and a glorious Reward, which he will confer; a Reward proportioned to the Faculties and all

all thoſe reaſonable Deſires, which are proper to Man.

XXIV. Now, the two Faculties of Man being Underſtanding and Will, his Reward, the Reward proper to him as Man, will conſiſt in their Improvement and Perfection; in Man's knowing what is worthy to be known, and in his chuſing and enjoying ſuch Objects as are moſt worthy to be choſen and enjoyed. Whether the Soul will have the ſame Senſations in a ſeparate State as at preſent, by means of its Union with the Body, and the Commerce it maintains with ſenſible Objects, is not evident from any natural Principle: But it is evident, if it ſhould be the Pleaſure of God, whether in the Body or out of the Body, the like Senſations may be continued in a ſeparate State. For

as

as the Body is only the *Occaſion*, and not the efficient Cauſe of conveying ſuch Senſations to the Mind; God may imprint them upon the Mind, when no longer united to the Body, and appoint what other occaſional Cauſe he pleaſes for that End. It is more probable, indeed, that the Soul, when releaſed from the Body, and acting in its ſeparate and pure State, will receive new Senſations, and thoſe augmented to a great Number, rather than loſe any of thoſe which ſhe has already: provided, They will really tend to her Perfection. We can no more argue that an Occaſion of ſuch new Senſations, or any indefinite Number of them, is impoſſible; than a blind Man now can argue againſt the Poſſibility of Colours, becauſe he can form

no

no Manner of Conception concerning them.

XXV. Whether it may be proved from any Principles of natural Reaſon, that the Body will, any Time after Death, be reunited to the Soul, does not ſo evidently appear: Becauſe the Power of God is ſufficient to compenſate Man for all the good Actions done in the Body, without ſuch an Union; and indeed to capacitate the Soul for ſuch a Happineſs, as will infinitely outbalance the Merit of them, according to the qualified Senſe wherein I underſtand Merit. There is no Neceſſity then, from the bare Conſideration of a future Reward, of ſuppoſing a future Union of two Subſtances, ſo wholly diſtinct in the Nature and Properties of them. The Belief of

of that Article muſt, therefore, depend upon other Conſiderations, and eſpecially upon the Authority of divine Revelation, where God hath interpoſed, or may at any Time hereafter, think fit to interpoſe, by that means. Some pious Men, indeed, have argued, that as the Body bears a Part in the Service, by Abſtinence, Maceration, and Self-denial, or other Exerciſes proper to it; it ought to ſhare in the Reward: But we are not always to conſider the common Dialect, not even that of learned Men, as ſtrictly true and philoſophical. The Body, except in a metaphorical Way of ſpeaking, is not capable of *Reward*, as having, conſidered ſimply in it ſelf, no Senſation of its Reward, nor any Poſſibility, according to the cleareſt Notions

we can form concerning the Body of having any. So that whatever other Reaſons God may have for reuniting Soul and Body, there do not appear any Reaſons from the Conſideration of ſuch a Union, in order to the Reward of our preſent moral Obedience.

XXVI. As to the future Puniſhments of wicked Men, for the Breach of thoſe immutable Laws of Reaſon and Order, which are preſcribed for the Rule of their Conduct; they too will be ſuch as are proportioned to their Nature and their Faculties. And whereof they may form ſome Notions, by that Pain, Diſorder and Anguiſh of Mind, which Sinners do even now frequently feel, when they reflect upon their Sins and Impieties againſt an almighty and avengeing God. Only there

is this Reaſon to preſume, that when the Soul ſees her Deformity in a naked View; and is ſenſible of her Loſs and Shame, and the Power of God in the Puniſhment inflicted by him; her Reflections will be, proportionably, more ſtinging and grievous; and theſe Scourges, which ſhe ſo ordinarily feels at preſent, when awakened into a Senſe of her Guilt, to a Degree not eaſily ſupportable, will then be turned into ſo many devouring Scorpions. How long theſe Puniſhments may be continued; or whether they will be perpetuated; natural Reaſon, I conceive, does not evidently determine: For the Reſolution of this Article, we muſt have Recourſe to the revealed Will of God. Only thus much, I think, may be ſufficiently deduced from natural

Principles, that the future Puniſhments, to be inflicted after this Life, are ſuch, as may deter wicked Men from offending againſt the Law of God; and that they ought to believe ſuch Puniſhments will be ſo great as may have ſufficient Force, when duly conſidered, to out-balance allthe Evils, they could have ſuffered in this Life, in the Diſcharge of their Duty. Otherwiſe a ſufficient Sanction to the moral Law, of which I have prov'd the Neceſſity, and which I all along ſuppoſe, would not have been given towards attaining the proper End of it, Obedience. And if, for this Reaſon, wicked Men ought to believe, and muſt expect, that God will inflict future Puniſhments upon them; there is great Reaſon, if not an abſolute Neceſſity of believing, he

he *will* inflict thoſe Puniſhments: Otherwiſe, he has put Men under an Obligation, in order to the Attainment of his End, of making a falſe Judgment.

XXVII. What has rendred it ſo difficult for Men to conceive, how the Soul, in a ſeparate State, ſhould be capable of Puniſhment, eſpecially of any other Puniſhment, than that of reflecting upon her own Vileneſs, Loſs, and Diſorder, has proceeded from hence, that they look upon the Death of the Body, as a Kind of *Annihilation*; for, having here ſcarce any pleaſing or painful Notices, wherewith they are moved, except by Means of the Senſes, and external Objects, they imagine, when the Soul goes into thoſe inviſible Regions, where the Spirits of Men departed are

ſuppoſed to reſide; ſhe can no longer be capable of the Pains and Pleaſures, which ſhe now feels; and wherewith her Capacity is, in a Manner, at preſent, wholly taken up; ſo that, if they do not believe her to be utterly extinct, as ignorant and unthinking Perſons are apt to do; their Imagination, repreſents her, as retiring into ſuch a State of Indolence, or Inſenſibility, as is but the next Remove to an utter Extinction.

XXVIII. This Error proceeds from a vulgar Notion, that the painful or pleaſing Senſations of Men are not primarily in the Soul, but in the Senſes; and that the Senſes are neceſſary and efficient Cauſes of exciting them in the Soul: Whereas they, who conſider the Properties of Matter attentively, will never be able to diſcover

diſcover, however, it be modified, or whatever Situation it is in, how it can produce the leaſt Eſſay towards Thought, or Perception: And, therefore, the Soul, when in the Body, or when out of the Body, it may have the very ſame Senſations, tho', probably, much more lively, ſtrong, and operative, out of the Body. To convince us of which, we need only conſider the Power of Imagination in delirous or dreaming Perſons; who ſee, feel, and taſte Things, which have merely an imaginary Subſiſtence, after as affecting a Manner, as they could have done, had ſuch Things been the real and actual Objects of Senſe.

XXIX. So that, in reſpect to the pleaſing or painful Senſations of Men, it is indifferent, by what Occaſion they are excited; whether by Means of circumam-

bient Bodies, or any new Modifications of the Soul; provided, we do but feel them. In order to which, it is not neceſſary, for Inſtance, there ſhould be a *material* Fire, to give us all thoſe painful Senſations, which we now feel when we burn a Finger, or when any other Part of the Body is expoſed ſo near to the Flames, that the rapid Particles of Fire, that fly from it, penetrate the Pores of the Body like ſo many pointed Needles, and lacerate the Parts expoſed to them; the Pain, that we then feel, not being in the Body, or effected by the Body, but wholly produced in the Soul. We muſt, therefore, look up for ſome higher Cauſe of our Senſations, than Matter, which has no Tendency of itſelf to produce them; which Cauſe can be

no

no other, than the Power and Will of God; with whom it is equal to work with Means, or without Means; and who can effect whatever he will, only by *willing* it.

XXX. The Author of *the Art of Thinking* argued therefore philoſophically, in ſaying, " It is " poſſible for a Soul ſeparated " from the Body to be tormented " by the Fire, either of Hell, or " of Purgatory, and to feel the " ſame Smart which one feels " when burnt; ſince even while " the Soul was in the Body, the " Smart of Burning was, in itſelf, " not in the Body; and was no " other, than a Thought of Sor- " row, which ſhe had, upon Oc- " caſion of what paſſed in the " Body, to which God had united " her." So that there is not

Reaſon to ſuppoſe it neceſſary *, in order to give the Soul thoſe Senſations, whether of Pain or Pleaſure, which ſhe now has by Occaſion of the Body, that ſhe ſhould be afterward united to the ſame Body, or to any material Vehicle whatever: Some other Being altogether immaterial, or the Soul, by ſome internal Modification of herſelf, might produce the ſame Effect. If, now, in her Union with the Body, the Pain or Pleaſure, which we feel, is ordinarily referred to ſome particular Part of the Body; this proceeds from the poſitive Will of God, and to the End greater Care may be taken towards preſerving the ſeveral Parts of the Machine: But were it not for

* See Mr. *Bayle* under the Article *Epicurus*.

this

this Cauſe, there could be no Reaſon, why the Soul ſhould refer her Senſations to any particular Part of the Body, or, in any Reſpect out of herſelf. But ſhe might be ſenſible of Pain and Pleaſure, of Heat and Cold, by her own proper Act, without any foreign Cauſe; or if ſuch a Cauſe might be neceſſary, there could, however, be no Grounds to ſuppoſe, why it ſhould be a bodily or *material* Cauſe. And from hence I argue (tho' it is not my preſent Buſineſs to enquire concerning the Nature of future Puniſhments to wicked Men, and whether, poſſibly, thoſe Puniſhments may conſiſt in their having certain Senſations, which will anſwer to the Pain we now feel by Occaſion of material Fire) that there is no Neceſſity, why the Soul, in order to become capable

capable of ſuch Puniſhments, ſhould be reſtored again to the ſame Body, or be united to any other Body.

CHAP. IX.

The Grounds of Error concerning moral Truth, with the Means of removing them.

I. *A Difficulty moved.* II. *The Conſequence drawn from it denied; and what may be juſtly inferred.* 3. *Reaſons of Ignorance in Men concerning moral Truths.* IV, V. *The two main Sources of Error, and the Tendency of them.* VI, VII. *Concerning Weakneſs of Mind,*

Mind, and the Effects of it. VIII. *A culpable Diffidence in Men.* IX. *Why the Principles of Morality are not known without a competent Application.* X. *Concerning Liberty of Mind.* XI. *Man not always governed by the Light of his Mind.* XII. *The Reaſon.* XIII, XIV. XV. *Why Men of the greateſt Capacity are frequently obſerved to be more eminently virtuous or wicked.* XVI. *A Conſideration reſpecting Mankind in general.* XVII. *The Levity of the Heart, how occaſioned.* XVIII. *Why Men of Parts ſometimes very ignorant in reſpect to the Principles of Morality.* XIX, XX. *We are moſt affected with Things preſent, and which actually pleaſe.* XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV. *The Method*

Method, whereby the Cauſes of Error may be removed.

I. IF the Laws of moral Virtue have that Force to oblige Men to Obedience, and to oblige under thoſe Sanctions we have aſcribed to them, they ought, you will ſay, to be written in ſuch fair and legible Characters, that all Men, on every Occaſion, may conſult and apply them. For a Law, the Senſe or Deſign whereof is not clear and intelligible, is, in Effect no Law. Men cannot follow a Light, which they do not ſee; or practiſe an unknown Duty: And yet it may be ſaid, that Morality changes, in reſpect to Times and Places; that is *Morality*, under the Notion, it is frequently underſtood and explained, as a received Rule for the Conduct of human Life;

Life; From whence ſome have concluded, there is no fixed or certain Standard of Morality; but that the Rules of it are different and mutable, according to the different Tempers, Opinions, or Circumſtances of Men. So that what is reputed decent, praiſeworthy, and of good Report (all Characters of moral Virtue) at one Time, or in one Place; at another Time, and in another Place, may be thought unbecoming, diſhonourable and infamous; the proper Characters, on the other Hand, of moral Evil.

II. The Truth of this Obſervation is not denied; but we deny the Conſequence, that Men would draw from it. It might, with equal Pretence be alledged, that there are no ſtanding Laws to Men,

Men, for the Government of civil Society, for the Direction of their Conduct in it; or the Deciſion of thoſe Differences, which may ariſe among them; becauſe the Senſe of thoſe Laws is ſometimes perverted, and miſapplied, contrary to the real Intention, and ſometimes to the very Letter of them. All, therefore, we can infer from that Variety, which is obſervable among different Perſons and different Nations, with reſpect to their moral Conduct, is, that they do not attend, as they ought, to the Rule of it; or that they will not ſee the Reaſons, according to which it ought to be explained; thoſe Reaſons being oppoſite to ſome prevailing Paſſion, Habit, or Intereſt wherewith they are affected. And how far ſuch Prepoſſeſſions are of Force to blind the Eyes; to corrupt

rupt the Judgment, or to wreſt the Conſtruction of any Law, contrary to its true, original and proper Senſe, it is unneceſſary to prove by an Induction of Particulars. And if theſe Things be done, ſome times, in the Face of a ſtanding and viſible Legiſlature; which hath a Power of aſſerting and vindicating the Authority of the Laws, and may interpoſe to that End by a viſible Authority; we are not to be ſurprized, that Men, under the Power of ſome violent Paſſion, are diverted from attending to the Deſign of a Law, the Miſapplication whereof, they do not apprehend, will be attended with any *preſent* Conſequences injurious to them.

III. Other Perſons may, poſſibly, miſapply the Laws of Nature, or be ignorant of them.

Not

Not becauſe they are unwilling to undergo the Labour of Attention towards procuring better Light; but on account of ſome natural Incapacity or Defect of Mind, which renders them incapable of purſuing their Inquiries, till they are perfectly able to comprehend the Subject Matter of them. For Things, how true or intelligible ſoever in themſelves, are not equally clear or intelligible to *all Men*. Some Perſons, either for Want of natural Abilities; of Inſtruction, or Education; being of ſuch very ſlow Apprehenſions, and having the Eye of their Underſtanding ſo darkened; that they are not able to diſcover; in a diſtinct View, the Relation between moral Subjects; eſpecially, in the more remote and conſequential Deductions to be made from them.

IV.

IV. Here, then, we have found the two main Sources of Error, in the Mind of Man; Want of *Strength*, and Want of *Liberty*.

V. I ſhall conſider, more particularly, how both theſe Defects tend to deceive and miſlead Men in their Inquiries concerning moral Truth.

VI. And Iſt, Where Men labour under any natural Weakneſs of Mind, and do not diſcover the Truth, which they ſeek after, without much Difficulty, they ſoon grow weary, dull, and diſcouraged; and ſecretly deſire to give over the Work, as being very painful, and, at the ſame Time, without any *certain* Proſpect of Reward: As People of an infirm or ſlender Conſtitution of Body, when they are put upon attempting any Thing, to

which they apprehend themſelves unequal, are ſoon intimidated with the Apprehenſion of their attempting a Thing above their Strength. And tho' they might, perhaps, by Degrees and repeated Application, proceed in the Work, with more Facility, and through frequent Exerciſe, acquire a ſtronger Habit of Body; yet they have not Reſolution ſufficient to overcome the Reſiſtance, which renders their firſt Endeavours ſo painful and diſcouraging to them.

VII. Thus it is, with reſpect to the Operation of weak Minds, in the Search after Truth; and, what I now, particularly, conſider, of *moral* Truth. The great Lines of our Duty are viſible to every Eye; but, when Men are to draw Inferences or Concluſions from them, tho' they proceed upon

upon true and certain Principles, yet the Connection, in their Way of inferring one Thing from another, being leſs perceivable, and their Views ſhort and narrow, the Mind grows impatient in the Purſuit, and, inſtead of Truth, what ſhe cannot diſcover without Pain, takes up with any Thing, true or falſe, that may procure her *Repoſe*, and free her from her preſent uneaſy State: And tho', notwithſtanding her Complaints, ſhe might, by reiterated Attempts, gather more Strength; for the Powers of the Mind, as of the Body, are augmented by Labour and Exerciſe, ſtill the Deſire of preſent Eaſe proves, upon the Competition, more prevalent, than the Deſire of a future, diſtant, and as ſhe apprehends very *precarious* Reward,

not to be acquired, after all, without doing great Violence to herſelf.

VIII. Theſe are the lazy Pretences, which Men offer in Excuſe of themſelves, for neglecting the Culture and Improvement of their Minds. And they are not only the Pretences of Perſons, more naturally weak and *ſaturnine*; but ſometimes of thoſe, to whom Nature has been more liberal of her Talents. There have been a great Number of Men, capable of diſtinguiſhing themſelves in their ſeveral Profeſſions; who yet, out of a weak Diſtruſt of ſucceeding in their Endeavours, occaſioned by their Idleneſs, and contrary to the natural Motions of Pride in moſt other Caſes, have neglected the Purſuit, to which they were happily formed, and wherein,

in, with a proper Application and Induſtry, they might certainly have ſucceeded; and ſo have lived and died undiſtinguiſhed; but not unaccountable, for neglecting to improve the Talents committed to them: If, perhaps, inſtead of the generous and beneficent Uſes to which they ſhould have employed them, they have not applied them in a Way of Commerce, rather tending to pervert, than to anſwer their proper End and Uſe; by turning them wholly upon the Affairs or Buſineſs of the ſenſible Life; and, inſtead of employing them to augment the Strength, making them directly inſtrumental to corrupt and debaſe the Mind; as the richeſt Soil, if not well cultivated, ſerves only to produce the ranker, and more noxious Weeds.

 IX. Nei-

IX. Neither is it any Cauſe of Objection, againſt the Clearneſs or Evidence of the natural Law, that the Knowledge of it is not to be attained, without competent Application. God hath given us Faculties with a Deſign they ſhould be employed. And it is ſufficient to juſtify the Reaſons of his Procedure herein, that we can, in a ſober and regular Uſe of thoſe Faculties, attain the End, which he propoſed to himſelf in giving them. It would rather have argued a Defect in the divine Wiſdom, eſpecially, in a probationary State of Man, where he is to give Tryal of his Abilities, had God rendred the Knowledge of his Duty, in all Caſes, ſo very eaſy and obvious, as wholly to ſuperſede his Endeavours in order to the Diſcovery of it. The Difficulty,

culty, therefore, which is pretended in the Search of Man, concerning the Rule of his Duty, to ſhew the Uncertainty of it, is ſo far from being an Objection againſt moral Truth, that the very Frame and Conſtitution of human Nature, under our preſent Circumſtances, ſeem to require that *ſhe ſhould only be found of thoſe, who diligently ſeek her.*

K. Another Source of Error in the human Mind, concerning moral Truth, proceeds from her Want of *Liberty*. We have always ſufficient Means or Capacities to diſcover the neceſſary Rules of our Conduct. Where ſuch Means, or Capacities are wanting, Men cannot, indeed, be, ſtrictly conſidered, as moral Agents, obliged by a Law, and under *Pain* of tranſgreſſing it. For as it is not

conſiſtent with Wiſdom, that a Man ſhould be required to practiſe what he doth not know; neither is it conſiſtent with Juſtice, that he ſhould be puniſhed for what he could not remedy. So that Man, conſidered as a moral Agent, muſt always, in the neceſſary Reaſon of the Thing, have the Means or Capacity of knowing what is requiſite to *denominate* him a moral Agent; and to give him a Right of being treated *as* ſuch. And it is ſufficient to my preſent Purpoſe, that every Perſon, who is accountable for his Actions, muſt have a competent Degree of Knowledge, for the moral Conduct of them; tho' a different Degree, of Knowledge, in Morality, may be communicated to different Perſons, in a different Degree; according as *God has dealt*

dealt to every One the Meaſure of his Abilities.

XI. But, tho' every Man has, if he attend to it, a ſufficient Meaſure of Light, to direct his moral Conduct; it does not therefore follow, that every Man *will* attend to this Light: For there are other Motives of Action, in Man, beſides that of pure and ſimple Underſtanding. Nothing is more evident than that we do not always govern ourſelves, according to the Principles of our Belief; even of thoſe Principles, which are moſt unconteſted; whoſe Truths we acknowledge; and to the Conduct to which we profeſs our ſelves obliged to ſubmit.

XII. This Contrariety between the Perſuaſion, and the Practice of Men, proceeds from hence, that we are differently affected with

with what we *feel*, and with what we only *ſee*: I do not mean with the ſenſible Eye; for the Impreſſions of Objects, which enter there, are often ſo ſtrong, that it had been happy for us, if we could not have opened it: But I mean what we ſee only by a naked View, or Speculation of the Mind. In the former Caſe, we often, indeed, find ourſelves carried away by a violent Impulſe, which proves too ſtrong for a fine and beautiful Thought either to divert, or reſiſt.

XIII. The Liberty, therefore, of human Mind may be conſidered, upon reaſonable Grounds, as diſtinct from the Strength of it. If it do not frequently happen, that Men of the greateſt Capacities, and ſtrongeſt Minds, have yet the leaſt *Liberty*: As with

with the greater Force a Torrent is carried, and the higher it riſes, the more difficult it is to keep it in the proper Channel. And, therefore, it has been a common Obſervation, for which I ſhall preſently aſſign a natural Reaſon, that Men of extraordinary Talents are commonly, and more eminently diſtinguiſhed, either for their Virtues, or their Vices; according to the different *Courſe*, which they are inclined, from Conſtitution, or ſome prevailing Habit, or Intereſt, to purſue.

XIV. The Reaſon of a tranſcendent and ſuperior Virtue in ſuch Perſons is, that when they apply their Minds to the Diſcovery of Truth; *when they ſearch for her as Silver; and ſeek for her as for hid Treaſure*; they do not only find her of leſs difficult Acceſs,

ceſs, and their Pains rewarded, at once, by a more eaſy and more full Diſcovery but they ſee thoſe great, beautiful and ſublime Truths, that are proper to ſatisfy their enlarged Deſires of Knowledge; which lie more concealed from leſs penetrating Minds, and are leſs proportioned to the Capacities of them. And, if all Pleaſure ariſeth from the Agreement of the Object with the Faculty, by the ſame Reaſon, in Proportion as the Faculty is of greater Extent, a greater Meaſure of Pleaſure muſt neceſſarily ariſe from the Contemplation and Enjoyment of it. So that, as it is Pleaſure which renders Man happy; when Knowledge thus becomes pleaſant to the Soul, at once, by facilitating her Application, and by ſatisfying her Deſires;

ſires; How can a human Mind, reflecting upon its own Dignity, be ſo worthily employed, or, with equal Force and Activity, towards its proper End *Happineſs*, than in an intimate Contemplation of Truth? And I do not doubt, but there are good Men of exalted Minds, who, in ſuch Contemplations of Truth, are ſo tranſported with the Light and Beauty of it, that they enjoy, for the Time, a greater Pleaſure, than the World, or any ſenſible Delights in it, can give; a Pleaſure ſo great and refined, eſpecially, when accompanied with a conformable Practice, that *neither Life, nor Death, nor Things preſent, nor Things to come, will be able to ſeparate them from the the Love of Truth.* For tho' we do not always follow the Light of

our

our own Minds, yet the more ſtrong, diſtinct and irradiating that Light is, we ſhall follow it ſtill with ſo much greater Freedom and Complacency.

XV. It is no leſs eaſy to account, why Men of extraordinary Capacities, when their Minds take a wrong and different Turn, are the moſt luxuriant in Vice, and give themſelves up to the greateſt and moſt extravagant *Diſorders*. Beſides the natural Force of Thought in ſuch Perſons, which hurries them away, and renders them impatient of the Means neceſſary to rectify the wrong Bent they have taken, and ſo precipitates them into the very Exceſs, to which Humour or Inclination may prompt them; they being Perſons of a fine, ſtrong and copious *Imagination*, eaſily find, or

or pretend to find ſome plauſible Reaſon, even for their greateſt Crimes; or where that cannot be found, ſo as to ſatisfy themſelves, or others, they yet paint thoſe Crimes in ſuch lively and deceitful Colours, as to give them an Air and Force which hides their natural Deformity; or, at leaſt, diverts them, in ſuch a Manner, from giving a juſt Attention to it, that *ſeeing they ſee, and will not perceive.*

XVI. But the general Reaſon why all Perſons, indifferently, are apt to be moved more by ſenſible, than by intellectual Objects, is, what I obſerved before; that the Impreſſions of Senſe are ſtronger and more affecting, than thoſe of naked Truth: Even the Minds of thoſe, who are capable of a more ſteady Contemplation of Truth,

Truth, and who take the greateſt Delight in contemplating it, cannot always dwell or feed upon abſtract Speculations. When, therefore, the Mind finds herſelf weary, or her Strength is much impaired, we naturally turn our Thoughts for Relief and Diverſion, upon Objects of another Kind; and meeting in the Way ſomething grateful and pleaſing in ſenſible Objects, our Deſire towards *them* is inflamed anew. As we may obſerve of Perſons, who, upon reading a good Book, have been ſo moved with ſome ſpiritual Truth inculcated to them, that they have thought, for the Time, Nothing could be able to withſtand the Force of it; but ſoon finding other Objects, or Affairs of the World, by Occaſion of which the Mind taſtes a preſent and

and ſenſible Pleaſure, the former Ideas, which appeared ſo lively and ſtrong, do not only give Way to them, but, by Degrees, are wholly obliterated.

XVII. This *Levity* of the Heart is occaſioned by the Commerce, we are obliged to maintain, with the ſenſible World, for the Preſervation of the Body, and other Ends of the ſenſible Life, which, I have obſerved before, could not be anſwered, if the Impreſſions of corporeal Objects, and the *Pleaſure*, they occaſion to us, were leſs ſtrong, than, in Fact, they really are. However, this Neceſſity, we are under, of converſing with material Beings, and the continual Avocation of the Mind on that Account, from the nobler Subjects, and proper Exerciſe of it, very

much tends to weaken its natural Force; and to render us leſs capable of conſidering any Thing, with an *intenſe* Application; eſpecially, if the Subject of our Meditations be intricate and perplexed, and, by Conſequence, painful.

XVIII. If we duly conſidered this, we ſhould leſs admire at the Darkneſs, Ignorance and Confuſion of Thought, even in Perſons, who do not want good natural Capacities. For Application is to the Mind, what the Direction of the Sight, to any Object before us, is to the Eye; if we would ſee and examine it diſtinctly, diſcover its true Proportion, and ſeveral Parts, and the Relation wherein it ſtands to other Bodies, we muſt take a particular and cloſe Survey of it. And thus it is, if we would fix

fix the Mind upon any intellectual Object, we muſt conſider it with Attention, we muſt ſilence the Senſes, Imagination and Paſſions; and obſerve, if we would have a clear Idea of it, what it really is in itſelf, and how it differs from other Objects.

XIX. The Mind is not only fatigued with a continual Attention to abſtract Truths, and obliged, both for its Relief, and other Reaſons above mentioned, to divert the Thoughts upon other Subjects; but we ſee ſuch Truths, at a Diſtance, or, as having, at preſent, no immediate or neceſſary Relation to us or to our Intereſts: Whereas, corporeal Objects are continually at hand, offering themſelves to us, and promiſing *actual* Delight and Satisfaction. Beſides, when the

Mind of Man would really apply itſelf, with Ardour, to diſcover any Truth and is agreeably employed in its Inquiry, the leaſt Thing in the World has Force ſufficient to break in upon him, and to interrupt his Cogitations. Sometimes, an accidental Thought, whereof he cannot trace the Origin, which gives him ſome pleaſing or painful Sentiment, quite diſturbs the Order of his Ideas, and carries him off, from his former Speculations, into a Region altogether different; and perhaps into ſome new and *ſtrange* World of his own forming.

XX. The Truths of Morality are, certainly, diſcoverable by the Mind, and agreeable to it; but they are not always diſcovered without Attention and Pain. And ſince the Soul naturally loves Plea-

Pleaſure, and always taſtes actual Pleaſure, when the Senſes are gratified; 'tis not without Violence and Difficulty, that ſhe can diſengage herſelf in ſuch a Manner from them, as to dwell long, much leſs, continually, in the Contemplation of moral Truth.

XXI. Having obſerved the two principal Cauſes of Error, concerning moral Truth, the Method of Cure may more eaſily be preſcribed.

XXII. In order to cure Weakneſs of Mind and to give it a greater Force and Extent, we ſhould habituate the Soul to Labour and Exerciſe; and not be diſcouraged, tho' we cannot, always, readily find what we ſeek, in the Search after Truth. Repeated Attempts may at laſt bring us to the Place, where ſhe inhabits,

tho' at firſt ſhe is more difficult of Acceſs. It would, in particular, be proper to accuſtom ourſelves to an Acquaintance with the more abſtract Studies, Logick, Mathematicks, and Metaphyſicks. The Uſe of theſe Studies, were they of no other Uſe, being excellent to open, to ſtrengthen and enlarge the Mind; the Habits of which are to be acquired and confirmed, as the bodily Habits are, by repeated Labour and Exerciſe.

XXIII. Metaphyſicks, eſpecially, which are only another Expreſſion for natural Theology do not only require the greateſt Abſtraction and Intenſeneſs of Mind, and, thereby, viſibly tend to enlarge, to fortify, and exalt it; but have, for their Object, the moſt important and glorious *Truths*, which

can

can fall under human Conſideration. And indeed it is, principally, the Knowledge of them, whereby we are enabled to aſcertain the Truths of Morality, and reſolve them into their true, proper and diſtinct Grounds. So that it may be affirmed, no Man can be, or ever was a good Moraliſt upon natural Principles, but one endowed with a competent Share of metaphyſical Knowledge. This Science, therefore, or as ſome term it, *Sapience*, however neglected, is not merely to be conſidered, as a Help or inſtrumental Means towards ſtrengthening the Mind; but in reſpect to Morality, *eſſential*, in order to enlighten and direct it.

XXIV. Towards encreaſing the Liberty of the Mind, ſeeing Men of greater Capacities are ſo apt to

be diverted in their Purſuits of moral Truth, and that Diverſion is occaſioned by the Commerce they have with ſenſible Objects, and the ſenſible Pleaſure they occaſion to them, we ſhould endeavour to draw the Mind, as much as poſſible, from ſuch Objects, and ſo far as is conſiſtent with the Neceſſities of the preſent State. So that the Soul, conſcious of her innate Dignity, ſhould aſpire to employ herſelf, in the moſt worthy Manner, and on the nobleſt Objects; endeavouring, by that Means, not only to avoid the Occaſions of Error, but to attain the Things that are *more excellent*, and go on to *Perfection*; acquainting herſelf, more and more, with the Beauty of Truth; and taking ſuch Delight in her Converſation, as may out-balance any of the low and mean

mean Pleaſures ſhe can taſte in foreign, eſpecially, in ſinful Gratifications; but ſhould rather, indeed, towards leſſening the Weight ſo apt to ſink her down, and carry her towards ſenſible Goods, often withdraw from them and reſtrain herſelf, in many Caſes, even from the Uſe of Things, in their own Nature, lawful and innocent.

CHAP. X.

Concerning the Uſe and Regulation of the Senſes, the Imagination, and Paſſions, particularly in this Chapter of the Senſes.

I, II. *The Reaſons of this Inquiry, and* III, IV. *Of the Inconſiſtency between*

between the Principles and Actions of Men. V. *Reaſon ought to aſſert her Sovereignty, and* VI. *Againſt what Enemies.* VII. VIII. *A particular Application of what has been ſaid to the Senſes.* IX. *The proper Uſe of them maintained againſt the myſtical Writers.* X. *Eſpecially of the Sight.* XI. *The Reaſonableneſs and, in certain Caſes, the Danger of gratifying this Senſe.* XII. *How to avoid ſuch Danger.*

I. IT will be, to little Effect, that we have diſcovered the Grounds of moral Virtue, the Obligation to practiſe it, and the Means of avoiding Error, in our Search after moral Truth; except Men, by ſome proper Means, may alſo

alſo be informed, how the Practice, the habitual Practice of it, may be attained.

II. To this End, it will be natural, in the firſt Place, to enquire, what thoſe Things are, whereby, Man is, principally, obſtructed when he endeavours to act according to the Light of his own Mind; which Light, it was the primary and direct Intention of Nature, that he ſhould follow.

III. Now the very ſame Cauſes, which we have ſhewed, are apt to miſlead and pervert the Judgment, have the greateſt Force, even when the Judgment is not perverted, to influence the Will. This is the Reaſon of the Inconſiſtency, for which it is thought ſo difficult to account, between the Belief and Actions; the Principles and Practice of Men; ſo

that what we do, we allow not, and *what we would do,* what Reaſon does not only allow, but approve, *that we do not.* Notwithſtanding, therefore, we *conſent* to the natural *Law,* that it is *holy,* and *juſt*, and *good*; yet this inward Approbation and Teſtimony of our Minds, concerning it, is not of Force ſufficient to reſtrain us from an unholy, unjuſt and evil Choice, when we determine to act. But *the Good that we would,* when we ſimply conſult the Light of Reaſon, *we do not*; and *the Evil, which we would not,* or which, when we conſult the Light of our Minds, we have ſome tranſient Deſires, at leaſt, to avoid, *that we do.*

IV. How it comes to paſs, that Man is ſo inconſiſtent with himſelf, as not to govern his Conduct by

by the Principles of his Belief, is a Queſtion beſide my preſent Purpoſe. I am now only to obſerve, that, in Fact, there are other Principles, whereby Man is governed, beſides thoſe of Light and Knowledge; and that every Man experiences in himſelf, whether he may be able, or not, to give a philoſophical Account of the Effect, and to anſwer all Difficulties on ſo very nice a Subject, that *there is a Law in his Members warring againſt the Law of his Mind*, and *bringing him into Captivity to the Law of Sin which is in his Members*.

V. The firſt Thing, therefore, we have to do, if we would aſſert the Authority of Reaſon, and re-eſtabliſh her in the Throne; if we would give her that ſovereign Command which ſhe ought to have,

have, and which ſhe is deſigned by God to have over the whole Machine, and all the Springs of Action in it, is to conſider where the main Strength of our Enemy doth lie? What the Order and Number of their Forces are, and where they will moſt probably attack us? To the End, we may not only be better prepared to defend ourſelves, but to chaſtiſe their rebellious Attempts; and to make them ſenſible, it does not become Subjects to give, but to receive Laws.

VI. Now, the moſt dangerous Enemies to Reaſon, the moſt apt to excite rebellious Motions againſt her Orders and Authority, deriving their chief Force, either from the Senſes, the Imagination, or Paſſions, what it principally concerns us to do is, to prevent

vent their Action ſo much as poſſibly we can; but, when that cannot be done, to reſiſt it with all our Might, and thereby to weaken their Force, till, by Degrees, we reduce them to Obedience.

VII. I ſhall apply this Rule ſeverally to the Senſes, Imagination and Paſſions, according to the Order wherein they are here ſpecified.

VIII. In reſpect to the *Senſes*, the Uſe of them is abſolutely neceſſary to the Preſervation of the ſenſible Life; to which End, indeed, as they are admirably formed, they appear to be *ſolely* given. So that it is not only reaſonable, if we would follow the Order of Nature, that we ſhould uſe them; but we may, lawfully, in ſome convenient Meaſure, gratify and indulge them. IX.

IX. The Deſign, therefore, of thoſe, who would lay down the Rules of a juſt and practicable Morality, is not, with the myſtical Writers, to preſcribe ſuch *Denudations*, and abſtract Flights of the Soul out of the Body, as if, for the Time, the Laws of Union, between theſe two Subſtances, were of no more Uſe or Occaſion to the Soul, than if ſhe really ſubſiſted in a ſeparate State: Leaving theſe ſublime Myſteries to thoſe, who are able to explicate them intelligibly, or to regulate the Motions of the Soul, and deſtroy the natural Effects of thoſe in the Body, by them: I ſhall readily allow, that Man, while he is in the Body, and ſtands in his preſent Relation to other Bodies, ought, ſo far as the neceſſary Ends of ſuch his preſent State may require,

to

Bodies, ought, ſo far as the neceſſary Ends of ſuch his preſent State may require, to maintain a Commerce in the ſenſible World agreeable to it, and to ſupport himſelf in that State ſo long as he can: Which yet he has no other Way of doing, but by uſing his Senſes, and by following, but ſtill under the Direction and Reſtraint of Reaſon, the Motions of them; and uſing them no further, than in purſuing the true Ends for which they were given.

X. But, becauſe it would carry me too far beyond the Bounds I have preſcribed myſelf, to apply this Rule to every Senſe in particular; I ſhall confine my preſent Reflections to that of Sight, this being the moſt capacious and extended of all the Senſes, and whereby, indeed, thoſe other

Objects of Senſe, which have the greateſt Power to move and corrupt us, are commonly firſt taken in: Or, if ſuch Objects previouſly occur to any other Senſe, it is yet the Light of the Eye, that ſhews them to greater Advantage, and the Luſt of it, which repreſents them more pleaſant and deſirable.

XI. But ſhall we, therefore, ſhut our Eyes to avoid the Danger which may ariſe to us from the Impreſſion of viſible Objects? Shall we not look *upon the Wine when it is red, when it giveth its Colour in the Glaſs, when it moveth itſelf aright*, becauſe we may be tempted to taſte more liberally of what appears ſo agreeable to the Sight; or, becauſe this is, moreover, a Senſe of ſo quick and nice Diſcernment, that it

it, very rarely, or never, deceives us, in the Report it makes concerning the Goodneſs or Agreeableneſs of its Object: Except where we are not in a true Situation to judge of it, or ſome great Artifice is uſed to impoſe upon us? Or ſhall we, for the ſame Reaſons, make a *Covenant with our Eyes*, not to ſee any rich, curious, and beautiful Production of Nature, or Art, leſt certain Deſires ſhould be excited in us of Avarice, Envy, or criminal Love? Such a Rule as this, were it really practicable, yet, if reduced to Practice, would put an End to ſome of the moſt agreeable, and, conſidered, in themſelves, very innocent Pleaſures of human Life, from which, it is not the Buſineſs of Morality to reſtrain Men, abſolutely, but only

to regulate their Uſe. Tho', in ſome Caſes, indeed, where the Danger of gratifying the Eye is more hazardous, or has been more frequently experienced, and attended with ill Conſequences; it is better to loſe the Benefit of it, and even, by a voluntary Sacrifice, in the Cauſe of Honour and Innocence, to pluck it out, and caſt it from us.

XII. But, ordinarily, *if* the Government of the Eye be well regulated, there is no Neceſſity for ſuch *Violences*. If an indiſcreet, or irregular Look has been occaſioned by certain Objects, it is in our Power to turn away the Eye from them; but, if that cannot always be done, it is ſtill in our Power to prevent their Action, by meditating upon ſome other Object, by calling the Mind off

from

from a Train of Thought, which, ſhe is inwardly conſcious, ought not to be purſued; and which, if purſued, muſt end in Guilt, Shame, and Diſorder. Whatever Power we grant to ſenſible Objects, even to thoſe Objects of Sight, which are apt to excite in the Soul the moſt ſtrong and violent Agitations; yet ſtill we leave her in Poſſeſſion of the Throne; and it is her Fault, if ſhe ſuffer it, on any Occaſion, or by any other Power whatever, to be uſurped.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Imagination.

I, II. *The different Effects of the Senſes, and the Imagination.* III. *The Force and Extent of it.* IV. *A Means of regulating it.* V. *That Men of Wit are ſometimes moſt vicious, and* VI. *moſt imprudent; with a philoſophical Conjecture, why they are ſo.* VII. *And how there happens ſo great a Difference in the Imaginations of Men.* VIII. *And why Vivacity is rather the Character of the Female Sex, than Strength of Mind.* IX, X. *How the Ima-*

Imagination may be uſefully employed. XI. *What was ſaid exemplified.* XII. *Concerning the Imagination of* Homer. XIII, XIV. *Of* Seneca, *ſuperior as a moral Writer.* XV. *Of* Iſaiah. *And,* XVI. *of* Job. XVII, XVIII, XIX, XX. *The Reaſon of mentioning theſe great Names, and the Uſe to be made of them, both for Encouragement and Reproof.* XXI. *Moral Virtue has, in all Ages, been aſſerted by the greateſt Wits.*

I. THE Senſes are acted by ſuch Objects, which, being preſent, cauſe an immediate Impreſſion upon the Organs of the Body; ſo that the Objects of them, as ſuch, properly ſubſiſt no longer, than we are converſant

with them; or have an actual Perception of their Force. But the Imagination is of much greater Extent; it recalls Things paſt to Remembrance; it repreſents Things that are not, as if they were; it puts future Caſes, not only upon probable Grounds, and improbable Conjectures; but often upon impoſſible, and ſometimes very chimerical Suppoſitions; it quite alters the natural State and Order of Things; flying to the remoteſt Part of the World, and back again in a Moment; and aſſuming a Kind of creative Power, whereby it makes new Worlds, new Empires, Kings, and other Potentates; and annihilates them again, at Pleaſure, in a Moment. All this the Imagination of Man has a Power of producing, by painting, in his Mind, Reſemblances of Things, that exexiſt,

exiſt; and ſuppoſing a thouſand Things, that have no Exiſtence. Upon both which Accounts, the more ſtrong, lively and copious, the Imagination of any Perſon is, the more he will be expoſed to the Danger, if it be not kept under a due Regulation, of having his Heart corrupted, and of being precipitated into innumerable Follies, and Diſorders.

II. If the only Power, which ſenſible Objects have to affect the Soul, ſo as to be the Occaſion either of Error, or of Sin, depended upon their preſent and immediate Action, by the Rules before laid down, we might more eaſily avoid the ill Conſequences, wherewith our Commerce in this World is too frequently attended; we might find Means, under the Apprehenſion of any dangerous Aſſault, to

to retire; or if we have been ſo unhappy, at any Time, thro' Surprize or Importunity, to be too familiar with them, we might break off the Correſpondence, by a final Separation: But the Imagination will not ſuffer us to part with them ſo. It is the ſame Thing, in a Manner, as to the ill Effects relating to Morality, when the Imagination is much heated, whether we *actually* ſee and *feel* the Object of it, or not. Nay, in certain more violent Commotions of the Brain, the Fibres of it are moved with as great a Force, as they would have been from an actual Impreſſion, by Means of external Objects; from whence ſome Philoſophers have concluded, that the Senſes, and the Imagination, differ only in the Degrees of more, and leſs.

III. The

III. The Imagination acting with ſo great Force, and being capable of ſpreading itſelf ſo wide over the whole created *World*, in a Manner, at once, and even beyond it, into the extramundane Spaces; particular Care ſhould be taken to lay it under ſome wholſome and convenient Reſtraints; if we would not ſuffer ourſelves to be carried away with it, with a blind Impulſe, beſides the Rule of our Conduct, and beyond all Bounds.

IV. It concerns us, in the firſt Place, to avoid all Reflections on ſuch Things, or Objects, by which the Imagination is moſt apt to be miſled, or corrupted; eſpecially, where, by natural Temper, by Cuſtom, or former Application of our Thoughts the ſame Way, we are inclined to purſue, or deſire

ſuch

ſuch Things, or Objects, after an irregular Manner. There have been but few Perſons, who were not naturally formed with particular Diſpoſitions to certain Vices. And, as the Imagination of ſuch Perſons is more ſtrong and lively, ſo much greater Difficulty they find in denying themſelves the Pleaſure of indulging it, if the Object, which it paints, not only be, in itſelf, agreeable, but ſet off, with ſuch adventitious Ornaments and Colourings, which are apt to give it ſtill a greater Force and Advantage.

V. Here we may diſcover the Reaſon, why Men of Wit, according to the popular Notion concerning that Quality, are not always Men of the ſtricteſt Virtue; or rather, that they ſometimes run into the moſt extravagant

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Exceſſes of Vice; and are the moſt flagrant Inſtances of a looſe Morality. The lively and beautiful Images, which they form in their Minds, ſo pleaſing to themſelves, and wherewith they obſerve others, perhaps, both pleaſed and ſurprized, diverts them from attending to the *Dictates* of Reaſon, which they look upon as dry, empty, and taſteleſs Conſiderations, when compared to thoſe gay, ſprightly Scenes, that a luxuriant Fancy prepares for them; and which, at the ſame Time, viſibly tends to gratify a ſecret Pride, they take, in being careſſed and admired.

VI. So pernicious is this Quality, that, however Men affect the Reputation of it, it often proves the greateſt Occaſion of betraying them, not only into the moſt

moſt ſcandalous Diſorders, but the moſt extravagant Follies. Whether it be that the Spirits of ſuch Perſons are carried towards the Brain, the ſuppoſed Seat of the Imagination, with a more impetuous Force; where, like a Torrent, they bear down all before them; or, that the Subſtance of the Brain, in ſuch Perſons, is capable of receiving more large and deep Impreſſes; or whether, on *both* theſe Accounts, from the ſtronger Action of the Spirits on any ſuppoſed Part of the Brain, and becauſe the Temper of it is more ductile and ſuſceptible of them, the Images, impreſſed on it, are more clear, large, and diſtinct; as the Strokes, made by a graving Inſtrument, are deeper, in Proportion to the more hard or ſoft Contexture of the Plate; and the

Force,

Force, wherewith ſuch Inſtrument is applied.

VII. From whence ſome Account may be given not only of that Variety of Imaginations, and of the different Degrees of Strength and Weakneſs, of Vivacity and Dullneſs of Fancy, obſervable in Men; but, probably, by the Reſearches of learned and able Phyſicians into the more occult interior Parts of the Machine; and by their diſcovering the ſecret Springs, whereby her Movements are performed; an Art, which, in other Reſpects, has been ſo happily improved to rectify certain natural Indiſpoſitions, might be applied, in order both to invigorate the Imagination, and to give it a greater Extent.

VIII. We

VIII. We may alſo form another very probable Conjecture, why the Character of the other Sex is rather Vivacity of Imagination than Strength of Mind. They ſometimes, indeed, excel in the latter, but generally in the former of theſe Advantages. And the Reaſon of their Superiority, herein, is naturally deducible from what has been ſaid, towards illuſtrating the preſent Subject. *Women*, being, in their natural Frame and Conſtitution, of a more tender, ſoft, and delicate Contexture, their Spirits find leſs Reſiſtance, in their Paſſage to the Brain; and the Fibres of it being more flexible, and eaſily ſhaken, and its Subſtance, in general, more paſſive and yielding, the Images, which preſent themſelves in it, are not only formed with greater

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Celerity; but are, at the ſame Time, more clear, lively, and diſtinct.

IX. But I return, from theſe incidental Reflections, to ſhew, how the Imagination, which, if not well regulated, is more dangerous to our Innocence, in Proportion, as it is more quick, lively, and copious; how, I ſay, this Faculty may not only be ſecured from Danger, but rendered highly ſubſervient to the Ends of moral Virtue.

X. To ſecure it from Danger, ſince we cannot, many times wholly avoid the Action of thoſe Objects, which are moſt apt to excite and inflame it; for then we muſt retire out of the World; and even in Solitude, in our Cloſets, or in our Beds, in Cells, or Deſarts, where ſuch Objects could not fol-

low us, the Images of them, tho' involuntary, would, perhaps, too often ariſe; if it may not be queſtioned, whether the Imagination is not, ſometimes, ſtruck with the moſt violent Emotions, in ſolitary Life. Since this Method of Cure is impracticable, we ought, however, and that is always in our Power, whether, in publick, or private, when any wicked *or irregular* Imagination does *ariſe*, ſo ſoon as we perceive the Motion and Tendency of it, to check and repreſs it; to turn our Thoughts upon ſome other Object; by that Means, to give the Spirits another Courſe, whoſe Diverſion is naturally followed with a different Train of Thought. And, if we are particularly happy in the Talents of Imagination, there are not wanting a vaſt Variety of Objects,

jects, which may give it, not only a pleaſing and innocent, but a very uſeful Entertainment, even in reſpect to the Subjects of Religion, or Morality.

XI. I might obſerve, to excite a generous Emulation, how happily ſeveral, of the greateſt Wits in the World, have employed the Imagination to theſe moſt noble and excellent Ends. But I ſhall inſtance only in four of them, *Homer*, *Seneca*, *Iſaiah* the Son of *Amos*, and *Job*. And tho' I ſhall obſerve a ſenſible Difference in the Imagination of theſe four great Characters; yet they all concurred, after a different Manner, in advancing the ſame Deſign.

XII. The Imagination of *Homer* was vaſt, lively, and comprehenſive. The Greatneſs and Dignity of it is diſcoverable, in

the Choice he makes of ſuch Things to furniſh out his Work with proper Materials; ſuch, as are of the greateſt Importance in Nature to excite our Admiration. With this View, he ranſacks Heaven and Earth, and ſeems to ſurvey the whole Creation, at one Look, to find Something, which he may ſelect, worthy to illuſtrate and embelliſh his Deſign. But this great Genius, whatever his private Opinion was, conformed to the Religion eſtabliſhed by the Laws; and did not think it proper to engage the civil Magiſtrate in a theological Diſpute. His principal Images are taken from the Characters or Manners of the Gods, which being, in many Reſpects, oppoſite to the common Principles of Morality, the Moral of his Poem is, upon that Account, and contrary to his Deſign,

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of much leſs Force, either to inſtruct, or perſuade. The Vivacity of his Imagination appears, from his deſcribing Things, after a Manner, as if they were really preſent Objects of Senſe; and the Extent of it, from his taking in, and regularly ſorting that Variety of Things and Circumſtances, of Cauſes, Actions, and Events, which are the Materials of his Poem; a Work ſo happily conducted, with ſo much Eaſe and Regularity, that he ſeems, in the firſt Plan of it, to have ſeen every Particular, from the Beginning to the End, according to the Order, wherein he proceeded to compoſe it.

XIII. The Imagination of *Seneca* is leſs regular and ſtrong; but fine, ſprightly, and and adventurous; his Figures are beautiful,

well coloured and bold, but ſometimes, too glaring; and his Diſcourſes are rather framed to take the Reader by Surprize, and pompous Appearances, than by Force of ſtrict Argument; though it is certain, he has laid down many excellent Precepts, founded on cogent Reaſons. But what confirms my Obſervation is, that his Reaſons are generally moſt forcible, when they are deliver'd in a plain, ſimple and natural Manner, without the Embelliſhments of Art, which he has not always the Art to conceal. His Imagination, therefore, may be compar'd to *Homer*'s, as a neat beautiful rural Seat, to a Caſtle which overlooks all the Country, and at once fills the Eye with Pleaſure and Aſtoniſhment.

XIV. But, whatever Advantage *Homer* had, on Account of the

the Force, or Extent of his Genius; it muſt be allowed, *Seneca*, in the Character of a moral Writer, employed his Imagination more happily: As reſolving Morality into better Principles, and enforcing the Precepts of it, not by mere, looſe occaſional Sentences, but by a Train of Arguments, in formed methodical Diſcourſes.

XV. *Iſaiah*, whom I do not conſider here as a Perſon inſpired, but as following the natural Bent of his Genius, was ſuperior to both theſe celebrated Writers in the Talents of Imagination: Wherein he had not only Strength and Beauty, Extent and Vivacity; but a Degree of Fire and Rapidity peculiar to himſelf; wherewith he is, ſometimes, ſo tranſported, that if we

do not keep our Eye very ſteady, we are in Danger to loſe Sight of him; or ſcarce able, if we have not a ſtrong Eye, to bear the Force and Luſtre of his Images. Eſpecially, when he raiſes our Thoughts up to a Contemplation of the *eternal Power and Godhead*; when he deſcribes the Works of Creation or Providence; or any Glory, in particular, of the viſible or inviſible World. And, indeed, that his Images, on theſe Subjects, are ſo ſublime, lively and juſt, is not, merely, owing to a great or fine natural Capacity, but to his having more true, adequate, and diſtinct Apprehenſions, concerning the divine Nature and Attributes; which, at once, tend to regulate, to enlarge, and refine the Imagination: So that,

there

there have been few Perſons, if any, in the World, more happy either in a ſtrong, lively and copious Imagination, or who improved it more by an acquired Knowledge; to which, there is no Doubt, but his Converſation, at Court, very much contributed.

XVI. And, in that Reſpect, indeed, he had the Advantage of another Perſon I propoſed to name, which is *Job*; or whoever is the Author of the Book, that goes under this Name. Tho' as to the Boldneſs, the Fire, and ſurprizing Force of the Images in that Book, he does not appear inferior to the Son of *Amos* himſelf. Nay he ſeems, upon one Account, to riſe higher in his Images; at leaſt, to raiſe our Devotions by them, ſtill to a higher Pitch; and that is, by his great

great Skill in natural Knowledge; which he, every where, ſo happily applies, in order to enoble and embelliſh his moral Inſtructions; and, thereby, more effectually to perſuade: For the Mind is never ſooner captivated, than by ſuch Images, which are taken from the admirable and ſurprizing Works of God, in the external Effects of his Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs. Particularly, when he ſpeaks concerning the original Formation of Things, he deſcribes the divine Action, and the ſtupendous Effects of it, in ſo lively, ſtrong and moving a Manner, as if he had actually ſeen God Almighty *laying the Foundations of the Earth*; or had heard all *the Sons of God*, upon the Conſtruction of his glorious Work, *ſhouting for Joy*.

Joy. I do not hereby intend, as if the evangelical Prophet, as he is called, had neglected the Study, or were deficient in the Knowledge of Nature; for he abounds with noble Illuſtrations from her Works: All I intend is, that the Author of the Book of *Job* ſeems to have a Claim to this Knowledge, as his more peculiar Diſtinction. And, perhaps, there is no Book extant in the World, which, could any Perſon be found equal to the Undertaking, might be commented upon more uſefully, in order to explain and eſtabliſh the true Principles of natural Philoſophy.

XVII. I mention theſe Names, among a great many others, to ſhew, of what Advantage it may be, to have a fine, lively and great Imagination; notwithſtanding the Danger to Virtue, which may

may accidentally attend the Abuſe of this Talent; for a great many Inſtances, to the Shame, and Scandal of human Nature, may alſo be found of ſuch Abuſes.

XVIII. It may deſerve the Conſideration of ſuch Perſons, what Sentiments themſelves would have had, and all the reſt of the World ought to have had of the four great Writers *laſt* mentioned; if, inſtead of employing the Talents of Imagination, towards promoting Virtue and Piety, they had made uſe of them, to confound the very Diſtinction of Virtue, and Vice; *to call Good Evil, and Evil Good*, and after having thrown down the Boundaries between them; and given Men a diſcretionary Liberty, without any Reſtraints

of

of Conſcience, to take whatever Way they might be inclined to chuſe, ſhould, upon the whole Matter, recommend Vice, where it could be practiſed with Safety and Impunity, as more eligible to them, in their private Capacity; and, eſpecially, as moſt conducing to the flouriſhing State of the Commonwealth; or as neceſſary to preſerve it in a flouriſhing Condition.

XIX. Such a Syſtem of Morality, inſtead of tranſmitting the Names, or Works of any Perſon down to Poſterity, with Honour and Luſtre, would have rendered him the Object of univerſal Deteſtation. Even *Epicurus* and his Followers, tho' they deſtroyed the Obligation and proper Motives to Virtue, yet ſuppoſed a certain innate Decency and Comelineſs

lineſs in it; for which it was of it ſelf deſireable; and many of them both practiſed it, and recommended the Practice of it to others, as moſt conducing to the Happineſs of private and publick Life. *Lucretius* diſtinguiſhed by that Kind of Wit, I am conſidering, tho' more looſe, in ſeveral Reſpects, than the Maſters from whom he copied; yet never advanced any Thing, to the Prejudice of moral Life, like what we have ſeen in a Nation; I do not ſay, profeſſing Chriſtianity, but formerly celebrated in the World, for writing *juſtly*, and thinking *ſoberly*.

XX. If Perſons of no great Talents, in the corrupt Eſſays of their Imagination, have yet been able to miſlead weak and ignorant People, who either cannot give the

the requiſite Attention towards the Diſcovery of Truth; or are incapable of detecting the Sophiſtry of falſe Reaſoning: What ill Effects might have been apprehended from them, had they been diſtinguiſhed by the Talents of a *Homer*, a *Seneca*, an *Iſaiah*, or a *Job*. It is by a happy Diſpoſition of Providence, that, as the Enemies of Religion are more *audacious*, and defy the living God with a higher Hand, their Abilities ſhould, in Proportion, be leſs, and the Force of their Attacks more eaſily broken.

XXI. I grant, Men of very ill Principles have, ſometimes, had an uncommon Meaſure of Wit; which they have employed as well, as they could, to defend thoſe Principles: But ſtill it may be obſerved, to the Advantage

of

of Morality, that the greateſt Wits have always declared on the Side of moral Virtue; and even many of thoſe, who have been far from conducting themſelves, according to thoſe very Rules, which they confeſſed to be pious, juſt, and reaſonable. Few have been able, ſo far, to throw off all the Regards of Decency and Conſcience, as openly to teach a looſe Morality; but ſcarce any, who have had the Effrontery to encourage it, as beneficial to Society; Attempts of this Nature, one would be ſtrongly inclined to ſuſpect, could only be formed by Men of the moſt abandoned Principles, upon a *Preſumption* of their living in the moſt corrupt and degenerate Age.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Of the Paſſions.

I. *How they differ from the Senſes and Imagination.* II, III, IV, V. *The Laws of Communication between the Soul and Body only to be reſolved into the* Will *of God.* VI. *The proper Inquiry concerning the Paſſions.* VII. *How they are to be regulated.* VIII. *Particularly, with reſpect to any complexional Vice.* IX. *Why ſtrong Paſſions render Men capable of higher Attainments; with the Advantages of a good and generous Birth.* X. *The End*

of that Reflection. XI. *Beneficial Uſes of the Paſſions.* XII. *A Difficulty concerning them moved. And* XIII. *A Rule laid down.* XIV. *Another Rule.* XV. *The Paſſions are apt to impoſe upon us.* XVI. *A Third Rule.* XVII. *When we are, more eſpecially, to take Care of them.* XVIII. *The Fourth and Laſt Rule towards their better Regulation.*

I. THE great Obſtacle to the Practice of moral Virtue ſtill remains to be conſidered. There is ſome Difficulty in reſtraining the Uſe of our Senſes, and in reſiſting the Action of ſenſible Objects; but ſtill more Difficulty in governing the Imagination, when it is lively, ſtrong and much heated, and moved, by

by Occaſion of them; eſpecially, when the Blood and animal Spirits are put into a violent Motion, which ſenſibly affects the Soul, and even renders the Operations of it, by the Air of the Face, or ſome other ordinary external Appearance, ſenſible to others. And theſe are what we call the Paſſions; which, tho' they have a great Dependance on the Imagination and Senſes, may yet be conſidered as different Principles of Action; but as differing only from the Inclination, according to the Degrees of more or leſs. For we do not deſire, or find our ſelves inclined to purſue any Thing, but what is, in ſome Meaſure, capable of affecting us. Our Inclinations, indeed, to Good in general, are neceſſary, and uninterrupted. We invincibly and

always deſire to be happy: But our Paſſions are excited, *occaſionally*, and by particular Objects; and, principally, by Means of ſuch Things as relate to the Body; to the good or ill State, to the Safety or Deſtruction of it.

II. We no ſooner perceive any Thing, conſidered as pleaſing, or hurtful to us, but the animal Spirits diſperſe themſelves through the ſeveral Parts of the Body, and put it in a proper Diſpoſition to advance or retire, to chuſe or refuſe, according to the *Quality*, good or bad, of the Object preſented; that ſo the Soul and the Body may, reciprocally, act, and be acted upon, and continually hold themſelves in Readineſs to aſſiſt, and ſupport each other.

III. By what Laws this Communication is ſettled; or how theſe

theſe mutual Offices are performed, ſo that when the Mind wills, the Hand moves, and when the Hand is wounded, the Soul feels Pain; this is a Problem not to be accounted for by any mechanical Principles; nay, it is contrary to the cleareſt Ideas we have, concerning a material and thinking Subſtance, (and there is no Way of arguing concerning the Nature of Things, but from the Ideas we have of their Nature and Properties) that there ſhould be any Manner of Union between them. And, therefore, it is only to be reſolved into the Inſtitution, and Will of God, that, by Means of certain Impreſſions made upon the Body, the Mind ſhould be affected with Pain, or Pleaſure; and thoſe Impreſſions be followed with Paſ-

ſions in the Soul, according as the Object is apprehended more ſalutary, or pernicious to the Body. So that if God ſhould ſuſpend his Will, or the ordinary Effect of it, in any Perſon, *but* for one Moment, his Soul, during that Suſpenſion, would have no more Dependancy on his Body, than on the Body of any other Perſon.

IV. It is eaſy to conceive, indeed, how two Bodies, meeting, ſhould communicate ſome Degree of Motion to each other, or receive by the Colliſion ſome Change in their Size, Figure or Contexture; but what are all theſe different Circumſtances towards producing a Paſſion in the Mind? What Relation is there between a Blow upon the Head by an Enemy, and the Paſſion of Anger

Anger and Revenge? And why ſhould not ſuch a Blow, if we merely conſider it, as cauſing a certain Vibration of the Fibres in the Brain, as well produce the Paſſion of Love? There is no Reaſon from the ſimple Conſideration of two or more Bodies, for Number and Magnitude make no Difference in the Caſe, why ſuch a Colliſion ſhould produce one of theſe Paſſions, rather than the other. Nay, upon an impoſſible Suppoſition, that Matter could produce any Sentiment in the Mind, a Blow, eſpecially a more forcible Blow, upon the Head, ought rather to produce, in the Party who receives it, the Paſſion of Love; becauſe if one Part of Matter could be, in any Degree, capable of ſenſibly affecting another, Love, not only im-

porting an Inclination to Union, but being encreaſed by it, the more the Parts of Matter ſhould incorporate, or impel one another, the greater Affection ought naturally to be the Reſult of ſuch an Incorporation and Impulſe.

V. But the Mind and Body are, in the Nature of them, ſo oppoſite, that there can be no imaginable Concourſe or Action between them. So that they, who think the Paſſions of the Soul naturally, and neceſſarily follow the Motion of the Blood and Spirits, argue not ſo much upon improbable, as, according to the cleareſt Notions we have of Matter and Mind, upon impoſſible Grounds.

VI. It is evident, however the Paſſions are occaſioned, that we really experience the Effects, and

ſome-

ſometimes feel the Commotion and Power of them, to ſuch a Degree, as is ſufficient for the Exerciſe of the moſt improved Minds; and, therefore, it concerns us much rather to inquire, how the Paſſions may be regulated and rendered ſubſervient to the great Ends of moral Virtue, than how they are excited?

VII. And here the ſame Rules, in general, may be applied to the Government of the Paſſions, which have been preſcribed for the Government of the Senſes, and Imagination; but with this Difference; that where ſenſible Objects, or thoſe of the Imagination, have proved dangerous, at any Time, to our Innocence, or, it may be apprehended, will act upon us with the like Force, on the preſent, or ſome future Occaſion,

ſion, Prudence will direct us to ſave our ſelves by Flight, in order to avoid the Action of them. But, the Paſſions being, in their own Nature innocent, and alſo the great Inſtruments of Action and a more ſublime Virtue in moral Life, we do not ſeem under any prudential Reſtraints, totally, to ſuppreſs them, even where they have proved the Occaſion of betraying us; ſo much as to moderate the Force, or to divert the Current of them; except in ſuch Caſes, where the Danger of Abuſe, or Diſorder from them, may be apparently greater, than the Advantage that can be propoſed by giving Way, for a Time, to them. There are, for Inſtance, many lawful Occaſions of Anger; and ſuch particularly, when the Honour of God, or the Intereſts of Religion, are

are concerned; or when thoſe, over whom we have any Authority, are guilty of Miſconduct, wherein we may *do well to be angry*; and to ſhew our ſelves ſo: But, if we are, at the ſame Time, of a Temper more apt to be inflamed, and the Provocation be ſuch, as may, probably, precipitate us into the more violent Exceſſes of this Paſſion; ſo as to deprive us of the Uſe of our Reaſon, and expoſe us to many Indecencies, to ſay Nothing of the more ſinful and dangerous Effects of this Paſſion; it is certainly, in this Caſe, much ſafer and more prudent to reſiſt the firſt Motions of Anger, though the Incitement to it might be juſt, than to run the Hazard of thoſe evil Conſequences, by giving Way to it, which would more than over-balance the good Effects we could

could propoſe to our ſelves *by in*dulging it.

VIII. In this, and the like Caſes with reſpect to the other Paſſions, every Man is to conſider his own Strength; and, eſpecially, ſhould have an Eye to *his* predominant, and complexional Temper; for we are never ſooner overcome, than when we fight againſt the Sin that *more eaſily beſets us*; the Sin of our Inclination. The greateſt Difficulty, therefore, will be in governing the Paſſion by which *we* are prompted to gratify it. Which yet *may* be done by reſtraining all irregular Incitements towards the more immediate Object of it, without extirpating the Paſſion it ſelf. For, indeed, the ſtronger the Paſſions of a Man naturally are, provided they are kept within

in

in due Bounds, the more capable he is, for the moſt Part, of attaining the Things, *that are excellent*; and of diſtinguiſhing himſelf by a more active and heroick Virtue. For Paſſions proceed from the more violent Emotion of the Blood and Spirits, or ſome other fluid Part of the Microcoſm, whatever that is, which cauſes a ſenſible Change in it; which Change diſcovers itſelf in the exterior Parts of the Body, eſpecially, in the Eye and the Face; from which we may generally conclude, in what Diſpoſition the Perſons are, with whom we converſe; but it is always eaſy from theſe Parts to perceive, when Men are *tranſported* with Paſſion; and, for the moſt Part, with what Paſſion in particular; almoſt every Paſſion imprinting on them

them a different Signature *visible* to others, who will obſerve it with any Degree of Attention.

IX. Now, according to the Laws of Union between Soul and Body, the more forcible or violent the Actions of thoſe Parts of the Body are, by Means of which we receive our Senſations, the more, in Proportion, is the Soul affected and put in Motion. So that it is not only true in Experience, that Men of the ſtrongeſt Paſſions are the moſt active, enterprizing, and capable of the greateſt Atchievements in Life; But a natural Reaſon may be aſſigned, why they ſhould be ſo; from the Conſtruction and Temper of the Machine, to which the Soul is united. And upon this Account it is, that Perſons well born, and deſcended, value them-

themſelves, not altogether without Reaſon, upon their Birth or Deſcent. For tho' the Soul is of celeſtial Extraction, and cannot be generated, yet the Operations of it ſo much depend upon the Frame and Temper of the Body, that Men generally excel in the Endowments of Mind, as the Body is more happily organized and diſpoſed. And as a good, happy and generous Temper, is, confeſſedly, as well as a vicious, crazy and weak one, tranſmitted from Parents to Children, there is a natural *Preſumption* in Favour of Perſons well born, that they ſhould be endowed with an hereditary Virtue; for Virtue, tho' there are Inſtances to the contrary, is always to be ſuppoſed the natural Conſequence of great natural Abilities:

bilities: For which Reaſon, when Perſons of Birth fail in the Qualifications, or Conduct expected from them, they are, by a forcible and ſignificant Expreſſion, ſaid to *degenerate*: To avoid which diſhonourable Imputation, in thoſe Parts of the World, where Perſons moſt value themſelves, upon the Advantages or Honour of their Birth, they are moſt careful to preſerve an ancient Deſcent, from ignoble, and debaſing Intermarriages. It is poſſible, in ſome other *Nations*, where this Rule hath been leſs obſerved, there may have, ſometimes, happened a Degeneracy in Perſons of noble Birth, from the ancient Virtue, and Spirit of their Family; which has not ſo much ſhewn a ſenſible Alteration, in the Blood of it, as a total Corruption.

X. My

X. My Deſign, in this Digreſſion, is to ſhew, by a pertinent, and I hope, not unuſeful Inſtance; how, by Means of the Union of Soul and Body, certain *Sentiments*, which we call Paſſions, are excited in the Soul, the Force whereof ſhe has yet a Power ſo to moderate, that, as they were deſigned to raiſe her to a higher Pitch, (and are, therefore, called the *Wings* of the Soul,) they may be improved to that End, without being diverted, by an irregular or indirect Uſe of them, to any other End.

XI. We do not, therefore, condemn Men for being ſubject to Paſſions; nor, even, for being of a Temper naturally more inclined to ſome particular Paſſion. The Intention of Nature, in forming them with ſuch a Temper

was good; and the Abuſes conſequential to it, which they ought to have prevented, are wholly owing to themſelves. A Man, indeed, without Paſſion will naturally be both indiſpoſed, and unfit for Action. It is then rather a Benefit of Nature, than a Subject Matter of Complaint, that we are born with certain Paſſions, which are proper, under a due Regulation of them, to render us more active and conſiderable; more uſeful to ourſelves, to our Friends, and to human Society in general.

XII. The Queſtion now is, ſuppoſing our Paſſions not only innocent, but, in certain Caſes, and to a certain Degree, requiſite; what Methods are we to take, ſo that the Degree given may not be exceeded? The Paſſions, as we

we have deſcribed them, are occaſioned in the Soul by a more violent Commotion of the Blood and Spirits; and, according to the Force of that Commotion, are, proportionably, more ſtrong and impetuous: How then can we be ſecure, that when they are once put in Motion, we ſhall be able to ſtop them, at Pleaſure, and exactly at the Place, beyond which if we ſuffer them to go, they paſs their proper Bounds, and become criminal and dangerous.

XIII. The Rule, in this Caſe, is always to keep a ſtrict Guard, and watchful Eye over them; and never to indulge them to the utmoſt Extent of what is *ſimply* lawful; for beſides that it is very difficult to diſcover where Virtue preciſely ends, and Vice begins;

their Frontiers are divided by ſuch thin Partitions, that the Paſſage, from one Side to the other, is eaſy and inſenſible. And, therefore, all prudent Perſons, who would preſerve their Virtue, will rather conſider, how far they may go with Safety, than how far Innocence will ſtrictly permit them to go? *He that loveth Danger ſhall periſh therein.* A Man may, perhaps, walk upon the very Brink of a Precipice without falling; but he *may* fall; and, if he eſcape with Life, repent *of his* Folly, with the Loſs of a Leg, or an Arm; Accidents, comparatively ſpeaking, of little Conſideration to him. Even the Loſs of Life, to a wiſe and good Man, is of no farther Importance, than the good or ill State of his Soul is affected with it. But the Loſs of Innocence!

nocence! A Breach in the intellectual Syſtem! A reaſonable Soul of Man, in a State of Confuſion, Diſorder, and *ſpiritual* Death! This is ſuch a Departure from thoſe Principles, which are the Glory and proper Character of Man, and diſtinguiſh him from all other Creatures, that Nothing can be ſaid to aggravate the Folly or Madneſs of a Conduct, that ſhould lead to it. And therefore

XIV. Another Rule, for the better Government of the Paſſions, and towards reſtraining them within due Bounds, is to conſider the pernicious Effects of them, when permitted to exceed their Bounds; for as they may be very inſtrumental to Virtue, if kept in Subjection; ſo when they are permitted to uſurp the Throne, and to reign; they ſubject the Soul,

which ought to govern not only to the vileſt and moſt abject Slavery; but introduce a Multitude of Evils into the State of the animal OEconomy it ſelf. The Diſorders, both of Body *and* Mind, which they occaſion, are too *viſible* to be mentioned: But they are alſo very pernicious, if we conſider them, in Relation to our civil Commerce. The Maxim, that we ſhould make no *Friendſhip with an angry Man*, will hold equally true, if we change the Term angry, for *any* other Term, that denotes a different Paſſion, to which a Perſon is violently addicted, and that has got the Dominion over him. Our Paſſions, indeed, when we are, in any extraordinary Degree, agitated by them, do not only cauſe us to break the Rules of ſtrict Juſtice,

tice, and Fidelity towards thoſe, with whom we converſe, but, frequently, all the Meaſures of common Decency and Reſpect; and even, in certain Caſes, betray us, ſo blind and precipitate are we, when tranſported with them, not only to do Things contrary to our ſtanding Inclinations, Principles, and Intereſts; but to the Prejudice, and, perhaps, to the Diſhonour of thoſe, whoſe Intereſts are, at other Times, as dear, in a Manner, to us, as our own. So that whether in reſpect to Conſequences that concern our ſelves, or others; whether we conſult the good State of the Body or Mind; it imports us to take particular Care about the Government of the Paſſions.

XV. This Care is ſtill more requiſite, if we conſider how apt the

Paſſions are to impoſe upon us, under falſe Appearances and Suggeſtions; to confound the Nature of Things about which they are converſant; and to put *bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter*; being, in themſelves, innocent, and given to us with an Intention to promote our Good, particularly, the Good of the ſenſible Life, they are ſo ready to act upon the leaſt Notice of any Thing which is pleaſing, or hurtful to us, that, even, on ſuch Occaſions, they often act *ſpontaneouſly*, without conſulting Reaſon, or waiting for her Orders. And, upon this Account of their Uſe and Facility in diſcharging the Functions proper to them, we leſs ſuſpect them capable of betraying us, or of deſigning any Injury. But a little Experience will ſhew, we ought

not

not to truſt too much to them; whatever Profeſſion they may make of a ſincere and diſintereſted Intention to ſerve us. For notwithſtanding they are very capable of promoting our true Intereſts, and of being, on many Accounts, very ſerviceable to us, and do actually promiſe ſome real Good, and contribute towards it; yet they always ſpeak, though leſs directly, for themſelves. Like thoſe Miniſters, who propoſe Things, under a ſpecious Pretence, and, perhaps, ſome good Appearance of ſerving the Publick, but are, principally, acted by a ſiniſter Regard to their own Intereſts, or ſome common Service of a Faction; and, upon that View, lead the Sovereign very wide of the Meaſures, and beyond the Bounds firſt deſigned, into innumerable

Errors

Errors fatal to himſelf, and to the Commonwealth.

XVI. The third Rule, therefore, for the Government of the Paſſions is, that, however obſequious they appear, we ſhould obſerve the Suggeſtions and Motions of them with a jealous Eye; in order to prevent thoſe Illuſions, to which we are ſubject, when we hearken too much to them. For as they ſpeak for the *Body*, and promiſe us preſent Delight, or the Removal of ſome preſent Evil, they always find us acceſſible; and, even, when they have through falſe and flattering Inſinuations miſled us, they are often ſo audacious as not only to juſtify themſelves; but to perſuade Reaſon to defend them, as well as ſhe can, by any Appearances of Argument, and ſo to make Uſe of her very

veryName and Commiſſion, againſt her own Authority. For it is the Nature of the Paſſions to be always in the Right; and from the ſenſible Conveniencies, that attend them, the Mind is ſo apt to give a partial Judgment in what relates to them, and to declare on their Side; that there is continual Occaſion for examining, previouſly, whither they really tend? And, afterwards, if they have not deceived or miſled us?

XVII. Theſe Rules ought to be obſerved, even where the Object of our Deſire is ſomething, in the Nature of it, and ſimply conſidered, innocent, good, or laudable. For with all theſe Characters, if we do not carefully obſerve the Tendency and Conſequences of ſuch Deſire, it may prove the Occaſion of betraying

us;

us: but if the Object of our *Deſire* ſhould not be ſo qualified; if it is, in itſelf, criminal, unjuſt, or impure; Reaſon will direct us to ſuppreſs the very firſt Volitions towards it; and at the Moment, when they begin to riſe. On the other Hand, Nothing ought to excite the contrary Paſſion of Hatred, or Averſation, but what is really evil and offenſive to us; or what we are obliged to deteſt, from ſome Motive of Piety towards God; of Safety and real Benefit to ourſelves; of *Juſtice* or Charity to others.

XVIII. I ſhall preſcribe but one Rule more, relating to the Conduct of our Paſſions, whether iraſcible, as they are commonly diſtinguiſhed, or concupiſcible. And that is, upon Suppoſition, they are perfectly regular, both in reſpect to

to the Origin, and the Tendency of them; yet a certain Proportion of Activity ought to be obſerved in applying them, according to the different Degrees of Excellency, or Evil, in their ſeveral Objects. The beſt, the moſt noble, uſeful, ſolid and laſting Things, are to be proſecuted with greater Ardor, than Things inſignificant, or little; Things vain, tranſient, and of ſhort Duration. The Reaſons of Order and Proportion, upon which Morality is founded, require, that Things ſhould be valued in the ſame Degree, wherein they appear in themſelves, really valuable. And, by this Rule, whatever is abſolutely, and of its own Nature, without Dependance on any other Being, worthy of our Love; that is to be loved primarily, and on Account

of

of its own Dignity and Perfection. As what is, merely, inſtrumental or ſubſervient toward ſome greater End, is only to be deſired in the ſame Meaſure, as it has a Tendency to promote that End: That the ſupreme Good, therefore, ought to be the ſupreme Object of our Love; and that every Thing, which tends to obſtruct our Enjoyment of it, is to be rejected with Deteſtation: That ſuch Things, which reſpect the preſent Life; beſides that they are of a more ignoble Kind, more unſatisfactory, mixed, and tranſient, are to be purſued with leſs Sollicitude; but never to be deſired, when they come in Competition with our main End, the Happineſs and Perfection of our Souls, ſo far as we may be able to attain them, whether in this, or in a future

future Life. Theſe are Concluſions ſo evidently ariſing from the natural Reaſon of Things; ſo ſtrong and cogent; that, however, Men oppoſe the practical Inferences from them: Yet, in Theory, they muſt neceſſarily aſſent to the Truth of them. As, on the other Hand, whatever is, in the Nature of it, more noxious, or more naturally tends to make us miſerable; eſpecially, to bring us into ſuch a State of Diſorder, as may render us by a natural Efficiency, or thro' the Effect of an ill Habit, *eternally* miſerable: This is what we ought to hate with a perfect Hatred; and which to avoid, we ſhould be willing to ſuffer, were that a neceſſary Condition of avoiding it, any preſent Evil, or temporary *Diſgrace* whatever, to which we might be expoſed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Deſire and Inclination in general.

I. *Of the Import of theſe Terms.* II. *In what Reſpect, the ſame Inclination is common to all Men.* III. *This illuſtrated.* IV. *The Error of the ancient Philoſophers concerning the ſupreme* Good *of Man.* V. *How* Epicurus *thought more juſtly as to that Article, than the other Philoſophers.* VI. *The Prejudice under which he ſuffered.* VII. *Two of his fundamental Errors obſerved.*

I. I Here uſe Deſire, and Inclination, as Terms, indifferently expreſſing the ſame Thing; and as properly importing that Motion of Man's Will, whereby he is invincibly, and, at all Times, carried towards *Good*. Now, tho' the Paſſions are inſeparable from the Inclination, and always ſuppoſe it, in one Degree, or other; yet, as they are, in a certain Degree, more lively, active and ſenſibly moving, the Inclination may be conveniently diſtinguiſhed, under a ſeparate Head, from the Paſſions; eſpecially, ſince there are good Grounds, from Experience for a viſible Diſtinction between them.

II. Some Perſons are of ſo calm and ſedate a Temper, that they

are rarely moved, or diſcompoſed by any Paſſion. The good or ill Uſe Men have formerly made of their Liberty, their particular Circumſtances, Temper, Education, and Manner of Life, expoſe them to many different Paſſions; which act upon them with a very different, and unequal Force. But Men, under all Circumſtances, have the ſame general ſtanding Inclination to render themſelves happy. So that it may be ſaid, notwithſtanding that Variety of Purſuits and Paſſions, wherewith Men compaſs Sea and Land, to gain their ſeveral Ends, that they have, properly ſpeaking, if we would reſolve Things, philoſophically, in their true Origin, but *one* Inclination. This is the Center, towards which all the Lines of Motion, in Man, tend; and wherein they will ultimately

mately terminate, though he ſhould draw them from every Quarter, or every Point, of the World, about him.

III. So that they, who appear to direct their Views, towards very different Ends, and to place their Happineſs in the Attainment of them; as of Riches, Power, Fame, or ſenſual Pleaſures; yet are really acted with the ſame general Deſire of Happineſs: As Perſons at an Entertainment, which is furniſhed with all the Variety of Diſhes that Luxury could prepare, do ſeverally chuſe what is moſt agreeable to their Taſte; but all are ſuppoſed to have one common End, in their different Choice, which is to pleaſe the Appetite.

IV. Had the ancient Philoſophers conſidered this, there would

not have been any Neceſſity for their differing ſo much, in Relation to the *ſupreme End* of Man; concerning which, according to *Varro*'s Computation, there were, in his Time, two hundred eighty eight ſeveral Opinions. Here lay the Ground of their Error; which might have been very eaſily corrected. It is evident they conſidered Happineſs, not in reſpect to the proper and formal Notion of it; but to its efficient Cauſe; that is, they called that Happineſs, which, in any Meaſure, or Degree, contributed to make Men happy, or to put the Soul in a happy State; but they did not define, what that State of the Soul was, wherein ſhe found, and actually felt herſelf happy. It might, to reſume the former Inſtance, be as juſtly ſaid, that the Pleaſure

with

with which a Man eats, when he is hungry, does not lie in his Palate, but in the Act of eating, tho' he ſhould have no Taſte; as that Riches, or other external Advantages of Life, make Men happy; and not an inward Conſciouſneſs of Delight; to which yet we do not deny, they may be, in many Reſpects, inſtrumental.

V. *Epicurus*, great as his Errors, and impious as his Principles, were, on other Accounts, yet thought more regularly upon this Article, than the reſt of the Philoſophers: He conſidered Happineſs, *formally*, as it was to be conſidered, in itſelf; not as it depended on external or foreign Cauſes; without which, how convenient ſoever they may be apprehended, yet the Soul may be conceived to ſubſiſt in a State of

Eaſe and Pleaſure. As ſuppoſing, on the other Hand, a Man in the full and entire Poſſeſſion of them, yet if he feel any inward Diſorder, or Uneaſineſs of Mind, he is, neceſſarily, in Proportion, miſerable and unhappy.

VI. His Maxim, therefore, was true, that the Happineſs of Man conſiſted in his being eaſy and pleaſed; but it was a wrong Inference, to ſay, He taught, as he hath been charged, that Men had Nothing to do, but to give a full Scope to the Appetites of eating, and drinking; or to indulge themſelves in Exceſſes of any Kind, to which their Inclinations might prompt them. For it appears ſufficiently from *Cicero*, that he preſcribed Temperance and Sobriety as proper Means of moderating the Paſſions, and of preventing

ing their irregular Effects; and, *as* tending, on that Account, directly to make Men happy. For there can be no Happineſs without Freedom from Pain; tho' we are, indeed, more perfectly happy in the Enjoyment of actual Pleaſure. But the Word Pleaſure carrying in it an ambiguous Signification, and importing both innocent and criminal Pleaſures, the other Sects of Philoſophers having a Jealouſy from the atheiſtical Principles of *Epicurus*, that he intended Pleaſure in the worſt Senſe, united in decrying his Doctrine, and in rendering his Memory odious; pretending, that his Syſtem, as it had Relation to the Conduct of human Life, directly opened a Way to all Manner of criminal Liberties; and, particularly, to that of an impure

Commerce between the two Sexes.

VII. His Notions, however, in general, as to the formal Cauſe of Happineſs, were true and well founded; but in theſe two Reſpects falſe: *That* he did not make God the Author of our Happineſs, who alone can produce, in the Soul, thoſe Senſations, which make us happy; and *that* he denied the Exiſtence of immaterial Beings; which alone can have any Senſations, either of Happineſs, or Miſery.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Whether moral Virtue is really practicable?

I. *One Reaſon of propoſing the Queſtion, from what had been ſaid before concerning the Paſſions.* II, III, IV, V. *The Difficulty on that Occaſion removed; and of the Paſſions of* Envy, *and* Ambition, *in particular.* VI. *No Conſequence from the latter of theſe Paſſions, eſpecially, to the Prejudice of moral Virtue.* VII. *Other Arguments tending to ſhew, that moral Virtue is impracticable, propoſed to be examined.*

examined. VIII. *Concerning the Depravity of human Nature, and the Deceitfulneſs of human Virtues.* IX. *Objections from them formerly conſidered by the Author.* X. *But why here propoſed to be ſummarily examined.* XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX, XX. *Several Arguments in Confutation of them.* XXI. *A juſt Sentiment of St.* Auſtin. XXII. *Man's Deſtruction from himſelf.*

I. AFTER all that has been ſaid, in the laſt Chapter, concerning the Paſſions; it may, perhaps, be pretended, that if moral Virtue ſhould depend on the Government of them, according to the Rules there laid down, there is little Probability, that we

we ſhould be capable of practiſing moral Virtue. For totally to eradicate the Paſſions is impoſſible; or, were that poſſible, it would not yet be proper, or convenient, to oppoſe the End and Deſign of Nature in them; an End, on many Accounts, ſalutary and beneficial both to ourſelves, and to others. There is, therefore, not only a phyſical Neceſſity, that we ſhould be ſubject to the firſt Impulſes of Paſſion, which are naturally unavoidable, and operate in Virtue of a mechanical Conſtruction of our Body; but a moral Expediency, that they ſhould very often be gratified. But yet we know the Nature of them is ſuch, that they grow more bold, extravagant, and ungovernable, by Indulgence: The Conſequence of which is, that inſtead

of

of animating us, in Purſuit of what is really beneficial, and ſalutary; or in avoiding any Thing noxious and prejudicial to us; they pervert the very Uſe of Reaſon; cauſe ſuch Emotions in the Body; and ſpread ſuch a Darkneſs over the Mind; that we ſee Nothing in a true Light, but blindly chuſe the worſe inſtead of the better Part: And even, ſometimes, Men are tranſported by Paſſion, to commit the moſt ſhameful and execrable Crimes. To this it is added, that Perſons of the greateſt Reputation for Wiſdom, and other Abilities, have been, on certain Occaſions, excited, by their Paſſions, to do Things that are not convenient; Things inconſiſtent with their known Principles, and below their Character: The meekeſt Men have been provoked by giving

giving Way to Anger, to ſpeak *unadviſedly with their Lips*; and Perſons of eminent Sanctity and Devotion, by hearkening to the Deſires of impure Love, have involved themſelves in the Guilt of very impious and unjuſt Actions. And the like ill Conſequences might be exemplified in reſpect to all the other Paſſions; concerning which it has been farther obſerved, that as we find it difficult, at all Times, to oppoſe our Inclinations, eſpecially, when more violently provoked, and put in Motion; ſo there are ſome Paſſions which appear to be, in themſelves, directly criminal; and, as to theſe, we are told, Men ought not ſo much to conſider the Method of Regulation, as how they may totally extirpate them.

II. That

II. That I may not be thought to have preſcribed any Thing, in the Nature of it, above human Capacity; it may be proper to ſay Something diſtinctly in Anſwer to theſe ſeveral Objections.

III. As to the Power of the Paſſions, in order to pervert the Uſe of Reaſon; we grant this to be an Effect, which hath frequently happened; but it is an accidental and irregular Effect; which Men might have prevented, thro' a good Uſe of their Reaſon and Liberty, by which their *Paſſions* ought always to be regulated. The Fault, therefore, was not in the Paſſions, but in the Abuſe of their Power and Liberty; and in exceeding thoſe Bounds, wherein the Paſſions were intended by the Author of Nature to be reſtrained.

IV. As

IV. As to the Examples of great, and, in reſpect to their general Character, of good and pious Men; all that can be inferred from the Exceſſes, into which they have been betrayed, is; that there are Seaſons, wherein Perſons animated with a ſtrong, and lively Senſe of Virtue, are yet more unguarded; or, wherein, there are ſome peculiar unhappy Circumſtances of Temptation, adapted, in one Kind, or other, to the Situation they are in, attended with a Force, they are leſs able, or, at the Time, leſs inclined to reſiſt. But, whatever, the violent Motives to ſuch Diſorders may be in great or good Men; their Conduct is no farther a Precedent to us, than it is agreeable to Reaſon; the *common* Law, by which all reaſonable Beings are

to

to be governed. Precedents, where there is any competent Authority to recommend them, may reaſonably be followed, if no certain or ſtated Judgment can be made, in the Caſe, from the Letter, or Intention of the Law; but they are never to be followed, or upon any Pretence of Authority whatever, againſt Law. And, as to the laſt Suggeſtion, that there are ſome Paſſions, of which Nature Envy is, pretended to be directly evil, and unreaſonable in themſelves: This is precariouſly ſpoken, and without Grounds. All the Paſſions, ſo far as they are natural, are good; Envy therefore, as it imports a State of Uneaſineſs, or Diſcontent, at the Happineſs, or ſuperior Merit of another Perſon, not being a reaſonable, cannot be a natural Paſſion, it being the De-

Deſign of Nature; which always proceeds according to a certain and well regulated Order, that there may be no oppoſite inconſiſtent Principles in her Work; but that the governing Principle in Man, ſhould govern every Part; that there ſhould be no *Schiſm in the Body*, or natural Syſtem; but a due Harmony and Subordination of every Member to the Head. Tho' even, in reſpect to *Envy* itſelf, that moſt ungenerous and ignoble Paſſion, as proceeding from the Motives before mentioned; yet if it only imported an Emulation of thoſe Things, wherein Perſons of real Merit excel, and a ſecret Regret at our own Defects, followed with an Endeavour to repair and amend them; it would be ſo far from being a culpable Paſſion,

that it might be attended with many happy Conſequences advantageous to ourſelves, and to Society. The Sorrow or Grief, which attends it, is not, as ſuch, criminal, but indifferent; and becomes good, or ill, according to the Occaſion whereby it is excited, or the End which is propoſed by it.

V. The ſame may be obſerved concerning another Paſſion; which, tho' not criminal in a qualified Senſe, yet, in popular Acceptation, is reputed among the irregular Paſſions, I mean that of *Ambition*; to which Men of great Minds, of an active and enterprizing Spirit, are, in Proportion, commonly more addicted. But if the End of it be only a Deſire, which a Man hath to diſtinguiſh himſelf by great and noble Actions, or to be put in a better Ca-

Capacity of doing Good; or of appearing in a better Light to that End; for without this Advantage, the fineſt Qualities in the World will be of little Significancy; Ambition, if confined to theſe Views, and regulated in all its Purſuits by them, is not only innocent, but highly laudable. Nay, a Man, to whom Nature has given a greater Extent and Elevation of Mind, is wanting to himſelf, and to her Intention, if his Views are not raiſed and extended in Proportion. The Difficulty is, leſt, in affecting to ſtrike too high or quick a Note on this String, he ſhould give it too ſtrong a Tone: Temerity and Boldneſs being more incident to ſuch, who have more Fire and Spirit in their Temper. And, therefore, it is too common for the ambitious,

inſtead of endeavouring regularly to eſtabliſh a Reputation by great, generous, and uſeful Services, in that Sphere of Action which Providence has aſſigned to them, to obſerve no Meaſures of Conſcience towards God, or towards Man; ſo they may be able to remove every Thing, and every Perſon, that ſtands in their Way: For, when Ambition breaks out into this Tumour, there is no Conſideration either of publick Good, or of private Right; no Reſpect of Juſtice, or Humanity; of *Truth*, or Honour; that will be of Force ſufficient to reſtrain it. Bribery and Corruption, Cruelty and Oppreſſion, Breach of Faith and Friendſhip, and of all Laws human and divine, even, in more brutal Tempers, thoſe of common Decency, and good Nature, will

will be thought lawful; at leaſt very excuſable; under a Pretence of being neceſſary to the main End propoſed.

VI. But theſe Conſequences of an irregular Ambition, or whatever particular Effects of it might be enumerated, as deſtructive to the Peace and Tranquillity of private Men, of private Families, and frequently of whole Communities, which are made a Sacrifice to it, are only to be conſidered as Deviations from thoſe Rules, whereby truly great Minds ought to regulate their Deſires. Such abuſive Characters of Ambition, may, however, afford an excellent Caution againſt all irregular Motions of it; and ought not to prejudice a Deſire, which the Reader, if he pleaſes, may call Ambition, of excelling in ſuch Things, where-

by a Man may really diſtinguiſh himſelf, as a more uſeful, or honourable Member of Society. An Ambition to be, and to do good, being an Ambition to be more like the moſt perfect and holy Being, the Fountain of all Goodneſs. This Paſſion, therefore, which is thought ſo peculiarly impatient of Reſtraint, and to ſet itſelf above all Rules, which are, indeed, inſeparable Characters of it, when immoderate; is yet, when regulated by the Intention and Ends of Nature, capable of being very ſubſervient, if not, of all other Paſſions, the moſt ſubſervient, to great and glorious Actions.

VII. We muſt ſeek, therefore, for ſome other Reaſons to ſhew, that moral Virtue is impracticable, than thoſe, which are pretended from the Difficulty of governing

verning the Paſſions. For ſuppoſing our Affections perfectly well regulated according to Nature, in reſpect to ſuch Things as are Objects of our Love, or Averſation: There is ſtill Something further requiſite to the Morality of our Actions; namely, that they ſhould be performed in ſuch a Manner, and with ſuch Purity, and Simplicity of Intention, as may render them acceptable to God. For our Happineſs, the End of all our Actions, depending upon the good Pleaſure of God, if we cannot perform an acceptable Service to him, a Service which it may pleaſe him to reward with a Happineſs proper to our State and Condition, we ſhould in vain endeavour to perform it.

VIII. Now, it is pretended, that whatever the Rectitude of

human Nature might be, when Man was originally formed by a wiſe, holy, and good God; yet human Nature (by what Means it is not here neceſſary to inquire) hath much declined from the ſuppoſed Order and Perfection of that State. So that even when Man does not appear to act from any particular Impulſe of Paſſion, yet his Action is ſeldom or never conformable, in all Reſpects, to the Rule of it; which requires, that Man, in his Character of a moral Agent, *ſhould* always act with a virtuous and good Intention. And yet were his beſt Actions, thoſe which are materially good and regular, as to the external Manner of their Performance, to be examined by this Rule; we are told, they would not only be found deficient, but many

many Times very blameable and vicious. It is owing, ſay they, to Pride, Vanity, Eaſe, Decency, a Deſire of obliging in order to be obliged, the Awe of Superiors, Cuſtom, Education, natural Temper, or acquired Habits, the Fear of Shame, of Puniſhment, or Loſs, that Men perform certain exterior Duties in common Eſteem, without any Regard, any ſeparate Regard, to a Principle of Conſcience. It was this Want of a virtuous and good Intention, that, in the Opinion of ſome Perſons eminent for human, as well as theological Knowledge, rendered the moſt heroick Virtues of the Heathens, as they appeared in the Eye of the World, only ſo many *ſplendid* Sins. And there are ſome, who paſs the like Cenſure upon thoſe, who profeſs to believe the

the Truth, and to be conducted by the Rules of a divine Revelation. There are modern Wits, philoſophical Wits, who will not allow, that there are any Perſons in the World, except a ſelect Number diſtinguiſhed, from the reſt of human Race, by a ſpecial Sanctification; who are capable of performing the leaſt Act of moral Obedience, that God can approve; or which can forward them towards the Ends all Men invincibly purſue, Freedom from Pain, and Happineſs. So that the moral World, how beautiful ſoever Morality is, in the Theory, yet, in Fact, is only made up of Appearances; and the beſt Actions of Men, could we ſee upon what Motives, with what Temper, and for what Ends they act, would have a very different Sentence

tence paſſed upon them by him, who *ſeeth not as Man ſeeth, and whoſe Judgment is always according to Truth.* It is, in particular to Pride, that, they ſay, Men owe the Reputation of many Actions, which the holy and righteous God deteſts.

IX. I have, on another Occaſion, mentioned and confuted a Principle, which I conſidered not only as highly injurious to human Nature, but to the Honour and Goodneſs of God: And it being aſſerted by certain Names of Diſtinction in the politer Parts of Literature, I particularly examined ſome of the principal Reaſons, whereby they endeavoured to ſupport it; not that I had to do with weak or artleſs Adverſaries; but the Love and Force of Truth was ſuperior to all other Conſiderations;

rations; and now conſtrain me to obſerve, what occurs to my Thoughts towards a general Anſwer, of ſo pernicious a Principle; without deſcending to take Notice the particular Arguments advanced to maintain it.

X. And it is the more incumbent on one, who would write a Treatiſe of Morality, to refute this Principle; as it is not only eſpouſed by Authors, who are ſuppoſed to have written with greater Freedom of Thought, and not to have been remarkable for a very ſtrict Morality: But, as ſome Perſons of great Learning, and Piety, have maintained the ſame Principle, as a ſpecial Article of Belief, and a neceſſary Conſequence of human Depravity; however, it was originally occaſioned, or has been ſince propagated. And,

XI. If

XI. If Man, in his natural State, for I confine myſelf to that, be under an abſolute Incapacity of doing any Thing, really acceptable to God; any Thing, but what is highly offenſive and provoking to God; and which, therefore, tho' Man uſes his beſt Endeavours to pleaſe him, muſt be neceſſarily diſpleaſing to him; this Incapacity muſt proceed, either from Want of Direction, or Aſſiſtance: Either Man has not ſufficient Light to inform him concerning his Obligation to a moral Conduct; or it is, ſuch a Light, as ſerves only to ſhew him his Way, and direct him to his End, whilſt he has no Power, or perhaps, no Inclination to follow it.

XII. That Man does not want a competent Light for his Direction appears from what has been ſaid; and, indeed, ſuppoſing Man wanted

wanted ſuch Light, he could be under no moral Obligation to act; for the Morality of any Action neceſſarily ſuppoſes a previous Knowledge of what we ought to do, and a Conformity of Behaviour to ſome ſtated Rule. So that we can never be obliged to act, but in Conſequence of what we know to be our Duty; at leaſt, by ſome general Law. Neither can we be obliged to act any further, than according to the Extent of our Knowledge.

XIII. And, therefore, the general Opinion is, that Man's utter Deficiency, in diſcharging what we call moral Duty, does not proceed from Want of Knowledge, but of *Strength*: The Light which is in him being ſufficient to reprove, to rebuke and exhort him, and ſo to render him ſelf-condemned

ned; while no natural Means are afforded to him, whereby he may be enabled to act according to it. Yet ſuch a Light, which only ſhews a Man his End, to render him more miſerable, by the Incapacity, he apprehends himſelf under, of attaining it, and which directs him to no Remedy, or Method of Cure, does not give us that Idea of the divine Goodneſs, which naturally ariſes in the Mind, when we contemplate it. Neither is it more conſiſtent with the Juſtice of God to deprive Men of Happineſs on Account of Offences, if ſuch *can* be Offences, which it is naturally impoſſible for them to avoid; than it is conſiſtent with his Goodneſs to give them the Deſire, and Knowledge of Things, which after all their Endeavours they muſt ever deſpair of poſſeſſing,

ſing. And yet on Suppoſition that Man, in his natural State, *has* not a competent Meaſure of Light, and Strength, whereby he may be qualified to know and practiſe moral Duty, in ſome acceptable Manner to God, both theſe Conſequences appear to be unavoidable.

XIV. So that whatever the Advantages of revealed Religion may be, which will be conſidered in the Sequal. it ſeems more honorary to theſe glorious Perfections of God, his Juſtice and *Goodneſs*, to which may be added his Attribute of Holineſs, that Men, in a mere State of natural Religion, *may* act from truly religious Motives, and upon a Principle of Sincerity; and it is alſo more human and candid to believe that ſeveral of the Heathens did act in that Man-

Manner, than to reſolve all thoſe ſhining Actions, which they performed, and for which we now admire them, ſolely, into a Motive of Pride, or Vanity.

XV. To render an Action acceptable to God, if any Qualifications can be conceived proper to that End, it is requiſite that we ſhould love him, that we ſhould refer what we do to his Honour and Glory; that we ſhould eſteem Virtue for the native Beauty, and Excellency, as well as for the conſequential Rewards of it; and, eſpecially, as it brings us nearer to an Aſſimilation with the moſt perfect Being; the Rule and Model of Perfection to all other Beings. A divine Revelation, we grant, will very much tend to ſtrengthen theſe Motives; and cauſe them to operate with

ſar greater Force: Yet to thoſe, who will attend to the natural Principles of Religion, it muſt be owned, they do not want their due Weight to perſuade; at leaſt, it will be impoſſible for any Man to ſhew, that they are, in all Caſes, too weak to perſuade. Being, confeſſedly, reaſonable in themſelves, why ſhould it be impoſſible for reaſonable Agents to be conducted by them? Why ſhould a Man's Reaſon have the leaſt Power to determine him, where the Deciſions of it are the moſt clear, ſtrong, and incontestable; and where it is his Intereſt withall that he ſhould be determined? If Men will not attend to theſe Motives, that is not to be charged to any Want, either of Light, Strength, or Convenience in them; but to their own cul-

culpable Neglect: The Effects of which they might, by duly conſidering them, have prevented; and ſuch a Conſideration would readily have diſcovered to them, that the Motives, I have here mentioned, to moral Virtue, are, in their own Nature, more powerful to perſuade to the Practice of it, than any temporal Conſiderations can be to induce a contrary Practice. And why ſhould not Men, in an Affair of the greateſt Concernment to them, and where they are now preſumed to act deliberately, with Knowledge and Conviction, be as capable of acting conformably to what Reaſon and Prudence direct, as in other Caſes of far leſs Conſequence to them? Why ſhould they not, in this Caſe, govern themſelves according to that Maxim by which

all wiſe and prudent Perſons are governed in every Caſe; that is, to prefer a more ſtrong and excellent Motive, to a weak and unjuſt Motive.

XVI. Thoſe very Perſons, who ſay, Man, in his natural State, never acts from a true Principle of Virtue, will not deny, the Light of Reaſon is ſufficient to inform him, that he ought to love, to fear, to honour God; and to purſue his own Happineſs; his true Happineſs; by all thoſe Means, which God has appointed towards the Attainment of it. Several of the Philoſophers diſcovered theſe Truths; and they are ſo obvious, indeed, when we give the leaſt Attention to them, that they ſeemed rather to flow from the primary Conceptions of Nature, than to be the Reſult of Art, or

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any philoſophical Inquiry. Now, on Suppoſition, Man might, by the Light of Nature, know theſe Principles, it will be impoſſible to ſhew, they neither, in *Fact*, had, nor, *virtually*, could have, any Regard to them in their Conduct.

XVII. Upon a general Conſideration, were we not otherwiſe convinced by Experience, it would be an Inference ſupported by much ſtronger Appearances of Probability, that reaſonable Agents have always acted, upon the moſt clear, powerful and reaſonable Motives: And ſuch are, inconteſtably, the Motives above-mentioned, to all thoſe, who will conſider them, with any becoming Degree of Attention.

XVIII. It is, therefore, not only a more pious and charitable, but alſo a more natural Concluſion, that ſeveral of thoſe, who

had no other Light to direct them, but that of their own Reaſon; ſuch of them, eſpecially, who have been much, and publickly, eſteemed for their Wiſdom and Probity, did act upon a virtuous Principle, than that they had no other End in all their Actions, but Vanity, Intereſt, Regard to external Decency, or ſome like foreign, and, merely, human Motive. It will be impoſſible to prove, that the Heathens did not do, what was, in the Nature of the Thing, reaſonable to be done; and what it, principally, concerned them to do, in Point of their true Intereſt.

XIX. It is a Truth flowing from the eſſential Perfections of the divine Nature, that God, in creating Mankind, deſigned their Happineſs; and willeth, conſequently,

That

That all Men ſhould be ſaved. For, whatever that Expreſſion may be extended to ſignify, in the holy Scriptures, it only imports, according to the preſent Acceptation of it, that God willeth, all Men ſhould *be happy*; happy, in ſome Meaſure, porportioned to their natural Powers and Capacities; at leaſt, in ſuch Meaſure, that the Miſeries, to which they may be here expoſed, ſhall not exceed the Benefits of Life to them, unleſs thro' a culpable Abuſe of their Liberty.

This being admitted, the firſt Conſequence is, that God, who always adapts proper Means to the End deſigned by him, will have *all Men come to the Knowledge of the Truth*; that being the Light, the true Light, where-

by every Man is to conduct himſelf, in his Way to Happineſs. And, therefore, it is neceſſary, in this Method of arguing from the Perfections of the divine Nature, (which, of all other Methods, is the moſt certain and concluſive, upon the Subject of Morality) that ſuch a Meaſure of Knowledge ſhould be communicated to Man, as is ſufficient, when he follows the Direction of it, to render him happy. For, otherwiſe, contrary to our Suppoſition, God, having propoſed an *End*, a moſt excellent and beneficial End, an End worthy of himſelf, in the Creation of Man, had yet left him without the neceſſary Means, that ſhould lead to it.

A ſecond Conſequence is, that every Man in, his natural State, muſt farther be ſuppoſed, to have competent

competent Abilities in order to attain, what the natural Light of his Mind directs him to purſue. For, otherwiſe again, beſides the Inconveniencies before mentioned, on Suppoſition of God's diſpenſing a Light to Man, which would ſerve only to reproach and condemn him, to ſhew him his Defects and his Miſery, the Conſequence immediately foregoing, with reſpect to God's Failure of the End propoſed by him, a Conſequence, highly derogatory to his Honour, would here alſo equally hold good.

XX. So certain, therefore, as it is, that God deſigns the Happineſs of Man; and that moral Virtue is neceſſary to Man's Happineſs; ſo certain we may be, God did intend to afford Man the Means, and hath actually afford-

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ed him the Means of practiſing moral Virtue, in ſuch a competent Degree, as may tend to render him happy. It is neceſſary, indeed, we ſhould form this Concluſion, not only for the Reaſon here mentioned, but, to the End, we may avoid, at leaſt, one of theſe two impious Suppoſitions; either that God hath implanted in Man ſtrong and invincible, but, at the ſame Time, vain deluſory Deſires of Happineſs; or that, he has commanded Men to do, what, in the Nature of the Thing, is impoſſible to be done, in order to attain Happineſs.

XXI. A learned and pious Father of the Church hath, indeed, in the Heat of Diſpute, advanced ſome Things leſs favourable to Mankind, and to the greateſt and beſt of Men, in a mere State of natural

natural Religion. Yet the Force of Truth, when he did not directly attack the *Pelagians*, or his Zeal againſt them, was, probably, leſs inflamed, drew this moſt juſt Expoſtulation from him. "Who would not exclaim againſt "the Folly of a Man, that ſhould "pretend to direct one, who is "known not to be capable of "following his Directions; or "that ſhould condemn any Per-"ſon for Diſobedience, who had, "confeſſedly, no Power of obey-"ing *". Reflections of this Kind are ſo natural and obvious, and the Force of them ſo irreſiſtible, that it is ſurprizing to conſider, Men ſhould ever have

* *Quis non clamet ſtultum eſſe præcepta dare ei cui liberum non eſt, quod præcipitur, facere; & iniquum eſſe eum damnare, cui non fuit poteſtas juſſa implere.* S. Auguſt.

been

been put under a Neceſſity of aſſerting the Reaſonableneſs of them.

XXII. I do not here enter into the Inquiry, concerning the different Degrees of Happineſs to Men in another Life, according to the different Degrees of Light or Grace, communicated to them, in this Life: It is ſufficient for my preſent Purpoſe, to aſſert, that all Men, how unequal ſoever their preſent Condition may be, in both theſe Reſpects, have yet not only ſufficient Light, but Strength, except by their own Default, to qualify them for a competent Meaſure of Happineſs; and that their *Deſtruction*, conſequently, *is of themſelves*, and *only* of themſelves.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Of common, or ſufficient; and ſpecial Grace.

I, II. *The Grounds of this Diſtinction.* III. *Concerning the Incapacity Man is ſaid to be under, in his natural State, of doing any Thing that is good.* IV. *Two Suppoſitions, on either of which a Principle of divine Grace may be aſſerted.* V. *And the Juſtice and Goodneſs of God vindicated.* VI. *A natural and ſtrong Reaſon, why God ſhould cauſe Man to depend continually on the Aſſiſtance of his Grace.* VII. *The natural*

natural Grounds of Prayer. VIII. *Of moral Actions, as oppoſed to ſpiritual.* IX. *A State of moral Virtue, in this Life, not a State of Perfection.* X, XI, XII. *Yet moral Virtue ſuppoſes a Conduct, in general, agreeable to the moral Law.* XIII. *We are to diſtinguiſh between moral Duties, and moral Virtue.* XIV, XV. *This Diſtinction illuſtrated from the Character of Fortitude in Men, and of Chaſtity in Women.* XVI. *The proper Inference from it.*

I. WHAT hath chiefly given Riſe to the Diſpute, whether Man is now capable of acting upon a virtuous and truly moral Principle, is a popular Notion, that towards enabling him, in

in his preſent degenerate State, to perform an Obedience in any Kind, or Degree, acceptable to God; or rather an Obedience, which is not directly diſpleaſing and offenſive to God; there is not only Occaſion for a *natural* Light to direct his Practice, and a competent Meaſure of natural Strength, to excite and engage it; but a Neceſſity, to both theſe Ends, eſpecially, to the latter of them, that he ſhould be aſſiſted with a ſupernatural Grace.

II. It is here, then, convenient to diſtinguiſh between that common Light, or that common Grace, which is, abſolutely, neceſſary to qualify Man for a competent Diſcharge of his Duty, from ſuch a ſpecial Light or Grace, as God may think fit to diſpenſe to a ſelect Number of Perſons

Perſons, towards rendering the Knowledge of their Duty, at once, more extenſive and diſtinct, and their Practice of it more uniform and perfect. And they, whom God has been pleaſed to illuminate and ſanctify, by ſuch a ſpecial Grace, are, certainly, as will appear from the Sequel of this Diſcourſe, in a much better Capacity of performing to him an acceptable Service, and of *working out their own Salvation.*

III. But, ſtill, we ſay, God never doth, or can require, *that* Men ſhould work to any End; but where he gives them thoſe Abilities, which may be neceſſary to effect ſuch End; neceſſary, in the Meaſure and Proportion, whatever that is, according to which, God intends, it ſhould be effected. All, therefore, any Man can

prove

prove, from the preſent degenerate State of human Nature, is, that Man, conſidered, merely, in his natural Capacity, can do Nothing pleaſing to God. This has not only been the Opinion of private Perſons, and among them, of many learned Men; but the publick Deciſions of Authority, in ſome Churches, have been alledged to ſupport it. Now, admitting thoſe Deciſions to be inconteſtably true, and well founded; how will it, therefore, follow, that God does not, by ſome ſecret Method of his Will, afford to every Man a Meaſure of common Grace, which may be ſufficient to repair his natural Diſorders or Defects, in ſuch a Manner, as, may recommend his moral Conduct to God's Acceptance?

IV. And whether moral Agents, in the Diſcharge of their Duty, act by Virtue of any natural inherent Power; or of a preventing celeſtial Grace; the Equity of God's Procedure, in relation to them, is the ſame; ſince, on either Suppoſition, the Obedience prerequired of Man to his Happineſs, and to God's Acceptance, is ſtill practicable.

V. Upon a Conceſſion, therefore, that Man, *in his natural State, cannot turn, or prepare himſelf for good Works*; no Manner of Inconvenience, reſpecting either the Goodneſs, or the Juſtice of God, will follow; provided, what Man cannot do by his natural Strength, he may yet be enabled to do by the Aſſiſtance of divine Grace, ſpecial or common; according to the Nature,

or

or Deſign of the Work, to which he is appointed.

I will add, that, in a human Way of reaſoning upon this Article, it is more probable, that God ſhould, by a particular Donation or Will, confer on Man the Grace, in whatever Degree, neceſſary to a Conduct truly virtuous; than that he ſhould give to Man ſuch a Power of regulating his moral Behaviour, as might be wholly arbitrary, and independent: Since, by this Means, the natural Pride of Man, the moſt common Source of Corruption in him, would not only be kept under a continual Reſtraint, from a Senſe of his own Imbecility: But the Apprehenſion, that God's Aſſiſtance is always neceſſary to him, in the Diſcharge of his Duty, would render him, at

once, more cautious of provoking God to withdraw it; and excite him, under all the more difficult Tryals of his Obedience, *by Prayer and Supplication, with Thankſgiving, to make known his Requeſts unto God.*

VI. This Conſideration diſcovers to us the natural Grounds of Prayer, as a religious Duty; with a very wiſe and cogent Reaſon, why Men ſhould *continue inſtant in Prayer.* "It being one "principal Deſign of Religion "to keep Men in a conſtant De- "pendance on God, this being, "indeed, one of the moſt pow- "erful Motives to a religious "Life; what could be more rea- "ſonable, than for God to make "that the Condition of an ac- "ceptable Obedience to him, "which might cauſe Men to de-

"pend

" pend, more abſolutely, upon him.

VII. So that the Notion of an inward and divine Power, ſupplying the natural Defects, and animating the religious Endeavours of Men, is ſo far from being an Objection, as ſome weak and ignorant Pretenders to Reaſon have made it, againſt divine Revelation; that Nothing can be more reaſonable, than to ſuppoſe, God has appointed ſuch a Power, as a ſtanding and ordinary Means to Men, of performing an acceptable Obedience to him, even, in a State of natural Religion.

VIII. The Diſtinction between moral and ſpiritual Actions, tho' in a Senſe, very proper and commodious; yet as to the Scope of my Argument, and the Nature of human Liberty, makes no ſenſible Difference. But to evince

that it does not, inſtead of my own Thoughts upon the Subject, I ſhall cite an Argument from Biſhop *Taylor*, which, in the Conſtruction of it, appears to me equally beautiful, and ſtrong. " The Caſe of moral Actions and " ſpiritual is all one; for that " Action is moral, which is done " in Obedience to a Law; and a " ſpiritual Action is no more; " ſave only it relates to another " Law, to the evangelical, or " ſpiritual Law of Liberty: But, " in the Nature of the Thing, it " is the ſame; and one may as " well be choſen as the other, " when they are equally taught, " and alike commanded, and " propounded under the ſame " proportionable Amability; and " till they be ſo propounded, " they are not equally Laws.

" Beſides

" Beſides this; the denying Li-
" berty in all moral Things; that
" is, in all Things of Manners,
" in all Things of *Obedience* to
" the Laws of God and Man; and
" the allowing it in Things, un-
" der no Law, is a Deſtruction
" of the very Nature and Pur-
" poſe of Liberty. For the only
" End of Liberty is to make us
" capable of Laws, of Virtue
" and Reward, and to diſtinguiſh
" us from Beaſts, by a diſtinct
" Manner of Approach to God,
" and a Way of Conformity to
" him proper to us; and except
" in the Matter of divine and
" human Laws; except in the
" Matter of Virtue and Vice; ex-
" cept in order to Reward and
" Puniſhment; Liberty and Choice
" were good for Nothing: For to
" keep our ſelves from Harm,

" from Poiſon, and Enemies, a " natural Inſtinct, and lower Ap- " petites, would ſerve our Needs, " as well as the Needs of Birds, " and Beaſts. And therefore to " allow it where it is good for " Nothing, and to deny it, where " only it can be uſeful, and rea- " ſonable, and fit to be done, " and is given by the wiſe Father " of all his Creatures, muſt needs " be amiſs *.

IX. It is not intended, by any Thing, that has been here advanced, as if Man, by the beſt Uſe he can make of his Liberty, in Concurrence with the common Grace afforded to him, were in this Life capable of an abſolute, or *Stoical* Perfection; we only contend for ſuch a Degree of moral Virtue,

* *Duc. Duh. B.* IV. *p.* 752, 753.

as

as is ſufficient, in general, notwithſtanding the many Failures in his Duty, to denominate a Man virtuous; and entitle him to that Happineſs, for which God originally endowed him with proper Capacities and invincible Deſires.

X. But whether, and how far, particular Deviations from the Rule of moral Virtue, in certain Caſes, do deſtroy the general Character of a virtuous or good Man, will, more, particularly appear from the following Conſiderations.

XI. Moral Virtue may be defined a Habit, formed by deliberate repeated Acts, exciting us, on all Occaſions, to diſcharge our Duty faithfully, and enabling us to diſcharge it, with greater facility.

XII. What

XII. What I am principally concerned to ſhew, at preſent, is, that moral Virtue ought to be denominated, not from this, or that particular Inſtance, but from repeated Acts of our Duty, and and the general Tenour of our Conduct, *as* reaſonable and free Agents. For the ſame Reaſon, which directs us, in one Caſe, to regulate our Choice or Action, by the natural Law, doth require, that they ſhould be regulated, accordingly, in all Caſes. The Rule of our moral Conduct, being always the ſame, ſhould always operate with the like Force, and produce the ſame Effect; at leaſt, no Perſon has a Right to be called a moral good Man, where ſuch an Effect does not diſcover itſelf, upon a common Survey of his Actions.

XIII. We

them under a general Notion of it, on that Account; which yet we rather do from a favourable Prejudice, that *they, who are faithful in much, will be faithful in that which is little*, than from any neceſſary or certain Conſequence in Fact; for how nice and exact ſoever Women may be in preſerving this Character, and in conforming to all the Meaſures and Decencies of it, yet we ſometimes find it in Conjunction with other Qualities, that are not to be examined too ſtrictly by the general Rules of moral Virtue. And, in ſuch Caſes, we cannot, upon the *ſole* Merit of it, admit them to be ſimply, or abſolutely ſpeaking, virtuous. Eſpecially, when there is obſerved a viſible Deficiency in ſuch other Parts of their Duty, as have a more ſpecial Reference

to

to the tender and delicate Formation of the Sex; Affability, Piety, and Complacency of Manners, with all the *Ornaments of a meek and quiet Spirit*. A manifeſt Failure in theſe feminine Qualifications, even ſhould the Sex be ſo prudent and cautious, as, in reſpect to the principal Character of it, never to be chargeable with an indiſcreet Look, Word, or Action, would nevertheleſs preclude them from a juſt Claim or Title to moral Virtue, in the true Acceptation, and full Latitude of it.

XVI. Theſe two Inſtances are ſufficient to ſhew, that moral Virtue conſiſts in acting conformably to Reaſon, the Rule of it, not in particular Caſes, but at all Times, in all Places, and under every Relation: And, indeed,

Morality

Morality, when conſidered by Men with reſpect to the Subject of it, the Regulation of their *Manners*, does evidently imply the whole Extent of their Duty; Manners, in the direct Signification of the Term, importing, not ſimply any particular Act or Inſtance of Behaviour in Men, but the general Current and Character of their Actions.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Concerning the Nature and Force of moral Habits in general.

I. *Connection with the two preceding Chapters; and of the two principal Qualities towards forming a Habit of moral Virtue.* II. *Whether moral Habits are natural or acquired?* III. *Moral Habits, how diſtinguiſh'd from artificial.* IV. *The Origin of moral Habits.* V. *The Temper of the Body influential on our moral Conduct.* VI. *More concerning the natural Reaſons of Prayer.* VII. *An Attempt*

Attempt toward explaining the Operation of the Habits mechanically. X. *Inference from it.* XI. *Habits ſooner formed in young People.* XII. *The Reaſon, why the good Reſolutions of Men often prove ſo ineffectual.* XIII, XIV, XV. *The Uſe to be made of it.* XVI. *A farther Illuſtration concerning the Power of moral Habits.* XVII, XVIII. *As Habits are not acquired, neither are they loſt inſtantaneouſly.* XIX. *The different Force of virtuous and vicious Habits.* XX, XXI. *A Difficulty moved and obviated.* XXII, XXIII, XXIV. *Another Difficulty conſidered.* XXV. *A general Rule towards confirming a Habit of moral Virtue.*

I. IT ſufficiently appears from what has been ſaid, in the two foregoing Chapters, that moral Virtue, that, which properly denominates a Man virtuous, does not conſiſt in the Performance of particular, tranſient, or occaſional Duties, how excellent ſoever they may be in their different Kinds; but, in a Conduct agreeable to the Rules of Morality in general. The ſame Law of moral Agents, which prohibits Sin in any Kind, prohibits it in every Kind: And, therefore, Moraliſts have *generally* defined moral Virtue to be a permanent Quality, or Habit of Choice, acquired by repeated Acts, whereby we are diſpoſed and rendered more prompt to do whatever Reaſon may require to be done; and to avoid whatever is ſinful: To which Ends theſe two Qualities are prin-

principally requiſite, *Prudence* and *Sincerity*: The former is properly ſeated in the Underſtanding, directing us what we are to do, and how to do it; the latter in the Will and Affections; inclining us to do it conſtantly, and without Interruption.

II. It has been diſputed, whether it ought to enter into the Definition of moral Habits, that they are acquired? And if they may not rather be ſaid to be natural? But the Arguments, for the common Notion of their being acquired, have been, generally, thought to preponderate, for theſe Reaſons: That from a naked, and ſimple Conſideration of thoſe Affections or Qualities, which are natural to us, or which operate, in Virtue of our very Frame and Conſtitution, we can neither, as moral Agents,

confeſſedly, are, be capable, *in* a ſtrict Senſe of Blame, or Praiſe; of Reward, or Puniſhment: We may commend a Man, indeed, for his Strength, good Shape, or Conſtitution of Body; or for an extraordinary Capacity of Mind; as we may do other Creatures that excel in their ſeveral Kinds, in Strength, Beauty, or Uſefulneſs; but, in a moral Senſe, the greateſt natural Advantages make no Difference among Men, except they have been improved *by* a regular Conduct upon virtuous Principles, to promote the great Ends of Morality. But ſuch a Conduct, however it might have been attained by a gradual, and, perhaps, inſenſible Growth in Virtue, had Man continued in a State of Innocence; yet, in his preſent degenerate State, is not attainable, as

as a happy Conſtitution of his Body may be preſerved, by the mere Strength of his natural Powers; but with much Diligence and Application; and, in many Caſes, not without ſome Violence and Oppoſition to his natural Temper: Whereas, all natural Habits, as all other Actions of Nature, are eaſy, ſweet, and pleaſant, and ſo far from being oppoſite to our Inclinations, that a Reſtraint from exerciſing them is always attended with a ſenſible Pain. To which it is added, that all natural Qualities, or Powers precede the proper Acts of them. As, in the Order of our Ideas, the Faculty of ſeeing is ſuppoſed prior to the Object of Sight. And ſo, in reſpect to all the other Senſes; whereas Men are only denominated virtuous from the

ſubſequent Action; or on Suppoſition, at leaſt, of an Action *effectually* choſen: Thus, before a Man can acquire the Reputation of Fortitude, he *muſt*, actually, ſurmount, or give ſenſible Proofs of his being prepared to ſurmount, ſuch Difficulties and Dangers, wherewith he may be expoſed to conflict: As he, who would be thought temperate, muſt lay a Reſtraint upon his irregular Appetites, and previouſly exerciſe many proper Acts of Self-denial. From whence it is concluded, that moral Virtue, eſpecially, a Habit of *moral* Virtue, is not a natural or infuſed Quality, but is formed or acquired by repeated Acts.

III. As moral Habits are diſtinguiſhed from ſuch, which we term natural; ſo it may be convenient to obſerve the Diſtinction between

tween them, and ſuch Habits, as may be called *artificial.* In moral Habits Men are termed good, not only from their Capacity of acting, or of doing what they ought to do, with the greateſt Addreſs and Facility; but from an actual Application of their moral Abilities, whenever a proper Occaſion of exerting them may preſent. He cannot preſerve the Character of a good Man, who neglects to improve ſuch Occaſions to the Ends of moral Virtue. It is otherwiſe in Habits artificial. A good Phyſician is denominated from his Skill in the medicinal Art, and would not forfeit that Character, tho' he ſhould refuſe to viſit a ſick Perſon in Extremity, and, upon no other Pretence, than that he is engaged in Company with a Number of ſelect

Friends. However, ſuch a Refuſal might expoſe him to juſt Cenſure, as a Man of Humour, of Pride, of Inſenſibility, or Negligence; yet, as a Man of *Art*, he would ſtill ſuffer no Imputation. It is the ſame, in reſpect to a good Painter, we call a Man ſo, who draws, in juſt Proportion; with Life and Vigour, with ſtrong, lively and laſting Colours; with a due Conformation and Structure of Parts; a good Mein, and all the heightening Advantages of Shade and Light; tho' he *ſhould*, for ſome time, intend or reſolve for the future, wholly to diſcontinue the Uſe of his Art. There is alſo this remarkable Difference between moral and artificial Habits; that, in Morality, we are leſs culpable the more we ſin out of Ignorance, or through Conſtraint,

ſtraint. But the Maſter of any Art, or who pretends to be ſo, does not expoſe himſelf ſo much to Reproach, when he offends againſt the Rules of his Art, by *Deſign*, as when he does ſo, out of pure Ignorance. Thus a Statuary, if he ſhould not intend a perfect Piece, would loſe no Reputation, if it ſhould appear leſs regular; but ſhould he undertake to ſhew his Art in finiſhing a Piece, and after all his Care and Pains to that End, it ſhould come out of his Hands very ill deſigned, or proportioned, or, on any other Account, notoriouſly defective, it muſt neceſſarily tend, in ſome Meaſure, to the Diminution of his Credit. The Caſe is very different in Morality. Ignorance here excuſes; and we have the Character of doing well or ill, not ſo much

much from the Acts of the Underſtanding, as from thoſe of the Will, and the Intention.

IV. Now, in order to know, more particularly, how a Habit of moral Virtue may be acquired, it is firſt requiſite we ſhould enquire concerning the proper Cauſes of it. I do not here ſpeak of ſuch ſupernatural Infuſions of Light, or Grace, whereby God may think fit, in an extraordinary Manner, and to ſerve ſome extraordinary Ends of his Providence, to diſtinguiſh ſome particular *Perſons*; and, eſpecially, on a Suppoſition, of his deſigning to reveal his Will to Mankind, or to raiſe up any choſen Perſon or Perſons, whom he intends to make the Inſtruments of ſome great Revolution in the World; admitting, what I now, all along, ſuppoſe a divine Pro-

Providence, there is Nothing repugnant to our natural Notions of Things; Nothing, but what is rather highly agreeable to them, in conceiving God may, ſometimes, interpoſe in the Government of the World, by ſuch ſupernatural Methods. But I am here only ſpeaking concerning the common and ordinary Principles, into which moral Habits are to be reſolved.

V. We muſt ſeek for the more remote Origin of them, in the Formation and Structure of the Body; for without the Body, certain moral Actions cannot be performed, nor, conſequently, a Habit of them acquired. And ſince, by the Laws of Union God has eſtabliſhed between the Soul and the Body, the Soul commonly follows the bodily Temper and Diſpoſition, it happens that ſome

Perſons

Perſons are much more capable, than others, of receiving Impreſſions of Virtue and Goodneſs, both on Account of a finer, and a more forward, Inclination: For not only the Strength, but the *Liberty* of the Mind, is very much owing to a more happy Texture or Conformation of the Machine, to which it is united. And, certainly, a natural and ingenuous Diſpoſition to virtuous Actions in general, or even in particular Inſtances, is one of the greateſt Bleſſings of Providence, to *which* we could have been born. For tho', by ill Education, through the Force of Cuſtom, or bad Example, a contrary Temper may be, and is, God knows, ſometimes introduced; yet ſuch a Change cannot be effected without great Oppoſition and Reluctance; and againſt much

much ſtronger Checks and Conflicts of Mind, than other Perſons feel in being corrupted, who are naturally of a Temper leſs ſenſible and ingenuous. And yet, even they, whom Nature has formed after ſuch a Manner, may through a good Uſe of their Liberty, and the Exerciſe of virtuous Acts, by Degrees, new model themſelves, and, at length, acquire not only a Propenſion to ſuch Things, to which they were before more averſe, but a Facility in practiſing them; which will be attended with much Satisfaction, if not with a ſenſible and permanent Delight. The Endeavour here, it is true, will be, at the firſt, and, for ſome Time, more painful and difficult; but the Glory of the Triumph will be greater, in Proportion, to the

Ob-

Obſtacles ſurmounted in the Way to it. It was this Conſideration which rendered *Socrates* ſo much admired in his own, and in ſucceeding Ages; not ſimply, becauſe he had acquired a Habit of living according to the Rules of a more pure Morality; there was Nothing here *ſingular* in a Profeſſor of Philoſophy; but becauſe he had been able, by a ſtrict, ſevere and uniform Courſe of Life, to overcome a perverſe and vicious Temper, which rendered him naturally leſs capable of *virtuous* Attainments.

VI. Yet we are not, in our Endeavours either to improve a good, or to correct a bad Diſpoſition, to rely wholly on our own Strength. I have aſſigned the Reaſons before, why God has obliged us, for a Supply of all our Wants,

Wants, to have Recourſe to him by Prayer. And, if our Prayers are, therefore, neceſſary, or will be heard by him, on any Occaſion; we have the greateſt Reaſon both to pray, and to expect our Prayers will be heard, for ſuch Things, which are moſt neceſſary to the Ends, for which God created us, that is, to our Happineſs, and to our Perfection. If *we, being evil, know how to give good Things*, Things phyſically good, or reſpecting only the preſent Conveniencies of Life, *to thoſe that ask us*; we may conclude, with much ſtronger Aſſurance, that a wiſe, good, and all-powerful God, will hear our Prayers to him, for thoſe Things which he ſees really beneficial and ſalutary to us; and, eſpecially, for ſuch a common Meaſure of Light and Grace, as he

he hath determined to confer *in*-differently on all Men, in *ſuch* Proportion, as may render them capable of attaining the Ends, for which, in his Wiſdom and Goodneſs, he hath created *them*.

VII. But the Cauſe, by Means of which, under the divine Direction we acquire a Habit of moral Virtue, are repeated Acts of moral Duties; for, however, we may be naturally formed, or inclined to do any Thing; yet through Uſe and Application we ſhall ſtill be *enabled*, to do it with much greater Facility. The Truth of this is not only confirmed by Experience; but Philoſophers have aſſigned natural, if they may not be termed, mechanical Reaſons for it.

VIII. The

VIII. The Operations of the Soul of Man, as united, at preſent, to his Body, do, in great Meaſure, depend upon the State of his Body; eſpecially, upon the Motions, which are excited, or performed in it, by Means of the animal Spirits; or of certain material Agents, whatever ſpecifick Name we give to them, which actuate the ſeveral Parts of the Body; and, particularly, the Brain, the occaſional, and moſt immediate Cauſe of our Senſations. For it is not neceſſary towards an Explication of the preſent Subject, that we ſhould exactly define what the animal Spirits are. Let our Conceptions about them be true or falſe, the internal Motions which are performed, in the Brain and Nerves, by Means of any material Particles, whatever

they may be, will equally tend to inform us concerning the Power of moral, or other Habits. Since, if the animal Spirits are not the occaſional Cauſes of moving the Soul; it is, at leaſt, moved by the Action, of ſome other ſubtile and active Parts of Matter; much after a Manner, from which we may draw the like Conſequences.

IX. It is viſible, for Inſtance, that when the Body is much debilitated by Sickneſs, or for Want of Nouriſhment, how *deſirous* ſoever the Soul may be of putting any Part of it upon a brisk Motion, it cannot always ſupply, to that End, ſufficient Recruits. Whereas a Man, in perfect Health, no ſooner wills, his Leg or his Arm ſhould be extended, but there is a viſible Inflation of his Muſcles,

Muſcles; which could not be made, except ſome bodily Particles, whatever thoſe may be, were, in Obedience to the Order of the Will, received into the Muſcles. From whence it is concluded, that the Soul exerciſes her Authority over the Body, by Virtue of certain corpuſcular Emiſſaries, which, from the Life, Activity, and Force of them, are called animal Spirits; and, perhaps, not without good and reaſonable Grounds. Now the Brain being the principal Place, where the Notices of the Soul, from external Objects, are received, and her Orders iſſued out: There is, always, in ſome Part of it, when it is in a regular State, a ſufficient Number of theſe Spirits or Meſſengers, to take the Courſe, and to go directly to the

Place, for which they are ordered. And the more, the *Paths*, thro' which they convey themſelves, are frequented and beaten, the ſmoother, and eaſier, and, conſequently, the more pleaſant will their Paſſage be. Nay, after frequent Journies, the Spirits will, by Occaſion of any Objects, whereby they have formerly been put in Motion, flow fortuitouſly, as it were, and of themſelves, without waiting for the Orders of the Will, into the Channels wherein they were uſed *to run*. This is the Reaſon, why Habits are not only more eaſy, in the Practice, but render us more ſuſceptible of ſuch Impreſſions, as are principally apt to effect us, or have much, and, frequently, affected us formerly; for, by the continual Action of the Spirits, the Way is made

made ſo plain to them, and all Manner of Obſtruction ſo entirely removed, that Light does not more naturally inſinuate its ſelf into any Aperture proper to tranſmit it, than the Spirits into ſuch Pipes, or Paſſages of the Body, which lye open to receive them.

X. From this Explication, it is eaſy to conclude, why neither in the Works of Art, or the Offices of moral Life, we, at firſt, acquire that Facility of acting, to which afterwards we attain by Uſe and Application: Why, for Example, a Man, when he is firſt taught to play on a muſical Inſtrument, does not move his Fingers with that Agility, which he will be able to do after repeated Tryals; when the animal Spirits, or whatever we call the Inſtruments of a more quick and eaſy

Motion of the Parts which compoſe the Body, have gained a free, and more open Current, through the Canals proper to convey them.

XI. It is, for the like Reaſons, that Habits of any Kind are ſooner formed in Children, than in aged Perſons. Nature, while we are young, being tender and ductile, eaſily gives Way to the leaſt Impreſſions, and long retains them: In an advanced Age, it is more difficult, from the firmer Contexture of the Parts of the Body, to open new Paſſages in it; or new Traces in the Brain; or if, at any Time, ſuch Paſſages, or Traces are opened, they are not eaſily kept clear, and without any foreign Mixture from Spirits of a contrary Nature, and apt to excite contrary Paſſions, or Sentiments.

ments. For though, through ſome extraordinary Emotion of the Soul, occaſioned by any very moving Providence, Diſcourſe, or Accident, the Spirits may, for the Time, take a different Courſe; yet ſo ſoon as ſuch Emotion, proceeding from any ſuch particular Cauſe, is over, they will naturally return again into their old Channel.

XII. This is the Reaſon, why we, ſometimes, obſerve ſo little Effects of thoſe pious Reſolutions, however animated they may appear, which Men make upon the near, and, as they apprehend it, certain, Proſpect of Death; or upon any other Occaſion, when the great Truths of Morality, by Reading, Meditation, or Diſcourſe, appear to them, as they often do to the moſt obdu-

durate Sinners, with a Light and Evidence, that cannot be reſiſted. I will add, that divine Grace, it ſelf, whether ſpecial, or more common, while the Mind is enlightened, or the Heart powerfully moved by it, yet does not work Miracles upon the Body. A Man, who approaches the Throne of divine Grace, with the moſt holy and ſanctified Diſpoſitions; who forms the moſt lively and ſtrong Reſolutions of entering upon a virtuous Courſe of Life, yet is not to expect, without a Miracle, *to be* freed from the Power of *his* evil Habits, but in the ſame Method, whereby he acquired them; that is, by repeated Acts: But by Acts, which require a Revulſion, and contrary Courſe of the Spirits. There is no other Way, or natural Means of his Recovery. He

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may as well, hope, immediately, upon his Prayers to God, and without any phyſical Application, to recover the Uſe of a Limb, which he has loſt, or is mortified; as to expect, that God will give, and, miraculouſly, continue to him, a different Motion of his Blood, or Spirits, or excite different Sentiments in his Mind by Occaſion of them, from thoſe to which he has been accuſtomed. I repeat it again, God does not convert the Soul of Man, by altering the mechanical Conſtruction of his Body. The Grace of God, indeed gives us thoſe Aſſiſtances, whereby we may be enabled to correct our ill Habits, and the Diſorder they occaſion in the animal Oeconomy; but he does not, by an immediate and poſitive

ſitive Act of his Will, free us from the Power of them.

XIII. If, therefore, upon our praying to God, that we may be enabled to overcome the Power of our evil Habits, we do not immediately find ourſelves freed from them; let us not conclude our Prayers fruitleſs, or inſignificant, God hears them, and will anſwer them, ſo far as it is conſiſtent with the Methods of his Grace, which are agreeable to thoſe of his Providence; in the Courſe whereof, notwithſtanding his abſolute Power over ſecond Cauſes, he, ordinarily, leaves them to act according to ſtated Laws, without interpoſing in the Government of them by a miraculous Power. Thus he will afford the common Meaſures of his Grace, towards reforming our ill Habits;

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thro' which we may, by a good Uſe of our Liberty, gradually, induce a contrary Habit of Virtue: But it is not to be expected, in ordinary Caſes, that God ſhould convert us by a miraculous Power.

XIV. Theſe Things deſerve very well to be conſidered, in order to reſtrain us from contracting ill Habits; eſpecially, in our younger Age, when the ſoft, delicate, and flexible Contexture of the Parts of the Body, render them capable of receiving any Form. And the ſame Reaſon, if we have been ſo unhappy as to contract any ill Habits, and are confirmed in them, at a riper Age, ſhould excite us, immediately, with all the Force we can apply, to ſet about the Work of our Converſion: A Work ſo painful and difficult, and diſtaſteful, that to ſucceed in it may

may, without a forced Expreſſion, in Regard to ſuch Perſons, be termed a *new Creation*; *a Putting on the new Man*; *a Renewal of the Spirit of our Minds*. The Organs, whereby the Soul acts, by the Miniſtry of the animal Spirits, being grown dry, hardened, and ſtubborn with Age, and unapt, on all theſe Accounts, to ſuffer any conſiderable Change. It is almoſt, in a human Way of Argument, as natural to put the Queſtion, Can dry *Bones live*, or Can a dead Body *be* raiſed to Life again? As, Can an old, habitual, and obdurate Sinner, turn from the Evil of his Way, and ſuperinduce a contrary Habit of Virtue; or bring forth *Fruits meet for Repentance*.

XV. Yet I do not ſpeak this to diſcourage a Sinner; under the Power

Power of the moſt inveterate Habits, from endeavouring his Converſion, but to ſhew the Neceſſity he is under, if he would not look upon his Converſion as deſperate, of attempting ſo important a Work, without farther Delay; and by beginning to withdraw the Supplies, which have fed his corrupt Habits, as ſoon as poſſible: For without doing this, or endeavouring to give a different Courſe to the Spirits; it will be as impoſſible for him, to effect a Cure; as it is for a Wound to be healed, while it is continually probed, or kept open.

XVI. This being a Conſideration of great Importance, it may not be improper to illuſtrate, farther, the Power of moral Habits, from certain natural Effects, in other Inſtances, beſides thoſe I have mentioned.

mentioned. By Uſe, ſuch Things as have been leſs palatable, and, even, offenſive to the Taſte, have become grateful and pleaſant; not from any real Change in the Quality, or Reliſh of the Meat; *but*, becauſe, by Degrees, the Organs of Taſte conform and aſſimilate themſelves to the Particles of it. So that the Inequality, which was before, in their Configuration, is removed, and a more exact Proportion ariſes between the Pores of the Palate, and the Particles of Meat: Which *Aſſimilation* occaſions that Agreeableneſs of Taſte, which was before wanting. Thus it is in moral Habits. Our Deſire and Appetites, naturally, incline, and conform themſelves to ſuch Objects, to which they have been accuſtomed: And, upon this Account, we ſay that Cuſtom

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is a ſecond Nature; or has the like Effect, by rendering any Object familiar to us; which we experience, when we are converſant, or employed about ſuch Actions, for which Nature originally formed and *diſpoſed* us.

XVII. This is ſo true in Fact, and common Experience, that Habit, and Cuſtom are Terms indifferently uſed to expreſs the ſame Thing. And, Cuſtom, in the natural and obvious Notion of it, always implies a Repetition of the ſame Acts; but not to inſiſt upon Words of an ambiguous, or indefinite Senſe; that Habits proceed from repeated Acts, and can only be produced by them, is evident from the Reaſon of the Thing. For a Habit, according to the common and natural

tural Idea of it, always ſuppoſes an eaſy Manner of Action; which yet is not to be acquired, by a ſingle Act or Endeavour, but by frequent Uſe. As Engines newly made, and never before tried, will not play ſo well, or readily, as after the Parts of them, by Uſe, are grown ſmooth, pliant, and better adapted to the Action of one another: This Illuſtration, from artificial Conſtructions, is not improper to repreſent that Facility of Action in Man, which proceeds from a more open, free, and gentle Current of the Spirits, through thoſe ſeveral Parts, or Organs of his Body, which Nature has deſigned *as* the Inſtruments of their Conveyance.

XVIII. And as a Habit cannot be acquired, inſtantaneoſly, or by a ſingle Act, neither can it be ſo loſt.

loſt. A temperate Perſon, who, through Surprize, or, perhaps, on ſome particular Occaſion, drinks, knowingly, to Exceſs, does not, therefore, wholly forfeit his general Character, of being a Man of Sobriety; much leſs, doth an intemperate Man, by a ſingle Act of Abſtinence, or Self-denial, when an Occaſion may be preſented of indulging his ſtanding Inclination to Exceſs, thereby, acquire the Character of a ſober Man.

XIX. There is, however, this remarkable Difference to be obſerved, between virtuous and vicious Habits; that ſinful, and ſenſible Pleaſures, for Reaſons reſpecting the preſent State of Man, which I ſhall not repeat, affecting the Soul after a more powerful, and lively Manner;

than the Pleaſures, ariſing from a virtuous Conduct; fewer *Acts*, and a leſs intenſe Endeavour, are requiſite to form a Habit of Vice, than a Habit of Virtue. I will not ſay, but it may, poſſibly, *happen*, that even a ſingle Diſorder, accompanied with an extraordinary Emotion of the Blood and Spirits, may have the ſame dangerous Effects, towards corrupting the Heart, as ſeveral particular Acts of the like Kind, performed under leſs aggravating and violent Circumſtances: *As, to* keep to the former *Compariſon*, a greater Force, applied to a new Engine, may ſupply the Want of that eaſy Motion, or Lubricity of the Parts, which might, gradually, have been produced, by a more frequent Uſe of it.

XX. It

XX. It would be inſignificant, here, to object, that if one Act be not of Force ſufficient to introduce a Habit, neither would a ſecond or third; upon a Pretence, that the ſeveral Acts, ſuppoſed neceſſary towards introducing ſuch a Habit, do not concur, or operate, at the ſame Time: For though we may eaſily conceive, how ſeveral Perſons, with united Force, may move a heavy Body, which could not be moved by any ſingle Hand; yet the Caſe is very different, when we reaſon concerning the Nature of moral Habits. The Application of thoſe Acts, which are proper to produce them, is not ſimultaneous, like that of Men, who, go Hand in Hand, to effect any Work, but ſucceſſive. So that, if the firſt Act of Power, in their Way of

reaſoning, do not produce a *Habit* of Virtue, neither will a ſecond or third; the Force of them, ſeparately conſidered, being equally inſufficient, towards attaining the End propoſed.

XXI. In Anſwer to this, it may be ſaid, though a ſingle Act does not produce a Habit of Virtue, yet it is not, wholly, fruitleſs; but, in ſome Proportion, influential towards the Production of it. As a Man, though he cannot, by his own Strength, move a Stone, yet may communicate ſome *Degree* of Force, according as he has more Strength, to the common Endeavour, whereby it is moved. As to all the Force concurring, at the ſame Time, that is accidental, and does not affect the Nature of the Thing. Neither, indeed, can the Illuſtration

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be applicable to moral Habits; becauſe, it is not practicable, that ſeveral Acts ſhould concur, at the ſame Time, towards forming them. And, therefore, to ſhew the gradual Improvements of a virtuous Agent to that End, it would be more proper, to compare the ſeveral Acts of Virtue, in order to the Formation of a Habit of Virtue, to the repeated Strokes of an Ax at the Root of a Tree; upon which tho' ſeveral of them may make but ſmall Impreſſion, yet every one of them contributes, more or leſs, towards cutting it down.

XXII. The Objection, which I now proceed to conſider, appears to be more difficult. It is pretended, that if a Habit gives a greater Facility and Freedom of Action; it will follow; there is leſs

Merit, becauſe leſs Difficulty and Oppoſition, in acting from a confirmed Habit of Virtue; than there is in ſuch virtuous Actions, which wicked Men themſelves, may, ſometimes, be induced to perform.

XXIII. In Anſwer to this, we ſay, that the Difficulty, which attends any Action, may be conſidered, either in reſpect to the Nature of the Thing done, or to the Party, by whom it is done; that the Nature, or inherent Quality, indeed, of any Action, *morally*, good, always enhances the Value of it; but that the Difficulty, proceeding from the proper Default of the Agent, and not from the Nature of the Action, cannot be ſuppoſed to add any Excellency, or Advantage, in any Kind to it: By Default of

the Agent; I mean ſome accidental Incapacity, which he hath brought himſelf under, by his own Irregularity, or Neglect. As, when a Man, for Inſtance, has, for a long Time, habituated himſelf to hard Drinking, and, therefore, finds greater Difficulty in the Practice of Sobriety, than a Perſon of a ſober and regular Life: He is not, therefore, more praiſeworthy for a ſingle Act of Temperance, than a Perſon, who is, habitually, temperate.

XXIV. Yet, though upon a general Conſideration, a ſingle Act of Vice may not produce a vicious Habit; nor a ſingle Act of Virtue a virtuous Habit: There are certain Caſes, wherein, as to their Conſequences, the different Acts of Virtue, or Vice, may have the like permanent and

powerful Effects, as if they *had* really proceeded from ſettled Habits. As there are ſome unwholeſome Meats, which do not deſtroy the Conſtitution, except by Degrees, and by repeated *Uſe*; but ſome Poiſons, which if they do not, at once, put a Stop to all the Motions and Springs of Life, yet occaſion ſuch Diſorder in the animal Oeconomy, and deprave it in ſuch a Manner, as will terminate, at length, in its Diſſolution. On the other Hand, when the Soul of Man, ſometimes, *exerts* itſelf with that Ardor, and thoſe generous Efforts of Zeal, in the Cauſe of Virtue, Truth and Honour, where Men chuſe rather to dye, than to purchaſe Life by baſe, and ignoble Submiſſions; ſuch Acts of heroick Reſolution, if they be not really productive

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of virtuous Habits; yet ſuppoſe ſo exalted a State of Virtue, and of that inflamed *Charity which caſteth out Fear*; that it is pious to believe, they, at leaſt, ingenerate, in the Soul, ſuch a ſettled, and excellent Diſpoſition, as is equivalent to the Force of a Habit; and which a good and righteous God will, accordingly, reward.

XXV. It might not be improper, to add certain Rules towards confirming a Habit of Virtue. But the only Rule, I would here lay down, is, that the Acts, proper to produce it, ſhould not be too much intermitted; but that having begun a good Work, Actions of a like Kind ſhould follow, before the Impreſſion of the former is worn out. As he that would learn any manual Art; will make a better Progreſs in it, by a conſtant

ſtant Attendance upon the proper Means of learning it for one Year, than he would do in ſeveral Years, if, through long Intervals, or Diſuſe, he ſhould afterward have Need to be taught again the firſt Rudiments of it.

CHAP. XVII.

How good Habits may be preſerved, or augmented, and ill Habits deſtroyed.

I. *Repeated Acts neceſſary to preſerve,* II. *And to deſtroy moral Habits.* III. *The gradual Acquiſition and Decreaſe both of good,* IV. *And bad Habits.* V. *The Difficulty in extirpating*

ting them. VI. *The proper Inference from that Conſideration.* VII. *An Objection removed.* VIII. *An unjuſt Excuſe of Men, who have contracted vicious Habits, not to be admitted.* IX. *How a Man may diſcover the true State of his Soul, as well in reſpect to good as ill Diſpoſitions, or Habits.*

I. AS Habits are acquired, they are alſo confirmed and augmented by repeated Acts, or rather repeated Acts are, abſolutely, neceſſary to preſerve them; for if thoſe Channels, wherein the Spirits, which we ſuppoſe the inſtrumental Cauſe of their Operation, are either choaked up, or replete with Spirits proper to excite a different Diſpoſition, differ-

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ent Sentiments in the Soul, will, naturally, follow ſuch a Change in the bodily Syſtem. Since the Union of the Soul and Body, a (Truth, frequently, neceſſary to be repeated, is Nothing but the Correſpondency between the Thoughts of the Soul, and the Motions of the Body; not by Virtue of any natural Law of Contact, or Communication between them, but, purely, in Conſequence of the Will of God; who has eſtabliſhed ſuch an Order between them, that certain Impreſſions, made upon the Body, ſhall excite particular Senſations in the Soul. And, therefore, the Authority of *Hippocrates* need not be urged to ſhew, that the Inclinations of the Soul change at the ſame Time with the Blood, and Humour; Wine, taken in a moderate Quantity,

tity, exhilarates a Man; and, in a larger, diſturbs Reaſon: A good or ill State of Body; a Tranſport of Paſſion, and even external Accidents; the Sight of a Perſon whom we much love, or by whom we have been very ill uſed; a bright, or a cloudy Day; a moderate, or violent Exerciſe, often give ſuch a Turn to our Thoughts, and ſo different an Air to our Converſation; that we appear, both to ourſelves and others, to be, in a Manner, different Perſons.

II. As Habits are acquired, and preſerved by repeated Acts, they may, by a Diſuſe of thoſe Acts, be, gradually, impaired, or, at length, totally deſtroyed; eſpecially, by Actions contrary to them, or apt to ingenerate a different Temper. For in Morality, as in Phyſicks, whatever is capable of

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Augmentation is ſubject to *Decay*. But, then, neither the *Tranſition* of Men from good to bad, or from bad to good Qualities, is inſtantaneous, but gradual, like the Growth and Decreaſe of *Plants* or Animals. Between thoſe two Extremes, there are ſeveral intermediate Spaces, through which a Man muſt neceſſarily paſs, before he can arrive at either Point.

III. But nothwithſtanding vicious and evil Habits are more ſuited to the Inclinations of corrupt Nature; are of a *quick* Growth; take deeper Root *in* leſs Time, and ſooner come to Maturity: Yet even before wicked Men can contract a ſettled Habit of Vice, and, eſpecially, before they can fill up the Meaſure of their Iniquity, they muſt overcome ſeveral Checks and Admonitions

nitions of Conſcience, and ſurmount many other Difficulties in reſpect to their Eaſe, their Health, their Reputation, or, perhaps, their Intereſt. And beſides theſe poſitive Acts of Sin, they will, by Degrees, intermit the Practice of Piety, or perform the Duties of it after a very cold, negligent, and ſupine Manner, before they can, wholly, efface, if that be ever practicable, all the former Impreſſions of a virtuous Habit; eſpecially, ſuch as proceeded from a virtuous Education. A Man, for Inſtance, who has been long, and in his younger Age, accuſtomed to perform his Devotions, at ſtated Times, in a regular and truly religious Manner, with Zeal and Fervency, cannot, at firſt, without ſenſible Regret, and many inward Conflicts of Mind,

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entirely omit ſo reaſonable a Service to *him*, who made, and who, continually, preſerves him; *And in whom he lives, moves, and has his Being.* Before, therefore, he can reconcile himſelf to ſuch an Omiſſion, he will begin to diſreliſh the Duty of Prayer; to complain, *What a Wearineſs is it?* to reſiſt the ſecret Admonitions which he may occaſionably feel in his Mind to it; and, if he cannot, abſolutely, overcome them, yet perform his Devotions without Life or Energy, till his Zeal, gradually, abating; will grow, at laſt, wholly unactive; and, upon a Competition between his Prayers and his Paſſions, he will not be long divided; *but either he will hate the one, and love the other; or elſe he will hold to the one, and deſpiſe the other.*

IV. Thus

IV. Thus too the Cauſe of deſtroying vicious Habits may be conſidered negatively, or poſitively. In the former Reſpect; when the Means, wherewith they are fed, or ſupplied, are intercepted, or cut off; as when an intemperate Perſon avoids the Occaſion of thoſe vicious Diſorders to which he has been formerly habituated; or, if he cannot wholly avoid them, lays ſuch a reaſonable Reſtraint upon his Appetites, that he doth not indulge them to Exceſs. In the latter Reſpect, when he actually exerciſeth thoſe Duties, which, in the Nature of them, are proper to deſtroy the ill Habits he has contracted, and to introduce Habits of a contrary Kind; for theſe Methods are attended at once with two Effects; they cure former Diſorders, and, at the

ſame Time contribute to a *more* firm and healthy State of *the* Mind.

V. The greateſt Difficulty, relating to the preſent Subject, lies in perſuading Men to break off thoſe ill Habits, in the Practice, and under the Power of which, they have long continued. For, beſides, that the beſt Arguments, have generally little Force, againſt the predominant Paſſions of Men; and no Paſſions are more violent than thoſe, which proceed from inveterate Cuſtom; *ſhould* ſuch Perſons, who have been deeply engaged in a ſinful Courſe of Life, be really prevailed upon to think of a Change; and to form, as the moſt profligate Sinners, will ſometimes do, certain tranſient Deſigns of a Reformation; ſtill the great Oppoſition they

they muſt expect to meet with in the Attempt; the Force, they are to put upon themſelves; and the Sacrifice they will be obliged to make of what, is through Cuſtom, become, in a Manner, natural to them; and which, perhaps, they apprehend it as painful to make, as to *cut off a right Hand, or pluck out a right Eye:* Theſe Things would be ſo apt to intimidate, and diſcourage them, from executing ſo good a Deſign, that, probably, it would have no other Effect, than thoſe pious Reſolutions, wicked Men, ordinarily make, in the Heat of their Paſſion or Zeal, when awakened into a Senſe of their Sins, under the Apprehenſion of preſent Death. Men would rather be inclined to think ſuch a Transformation, which is requiſite to introduce

new and contrary Habits, *in old* Sinners, equally impracticable, *in a* mere human Way of arguing, as it would be for an *Æthiopian to change his Skin, or a Leopard his Spots.*

VI. It is not diſſembled, that the Difficulty of converting a Sinner from the Evil of his Ways, is greater, in Proportion to the Continuance, and the Strength, of his ſinful Habits. But the Difficulty of a neceſſary Work is rather an Argument, why it ſhould be ſooner undertaken, and, *at the* ſame Time, with more Vigour, and Reſolution. However difficult ſuch a Converſion may be, it is ſtill poſſible, in the Uſe of thoſe Means, which God will afford to all Perſons, that are ſincere in their Endeavours, to be reclaimed from ſinful to good Habits.

Habits. A great many Perſons through a ſettled Reſolution ſupported by a juſt Greatneſs and Force of Mind, have been reformed from a vicious, to a regular and ſtrict Courſe of Life. Habits of Vice do not render Men, therefore, incapacitated for contrary Acts of Virtue; but only through an Abuſe of their Liberty, which it is in their Power to correct; for, otherways, they could have no Liberty: Though this Faculty of the Mind may, indeed, be much impaired, as the healthful State of the Body frequently is, by irregular Living; it may ſtill be recovered; as the Powers of Life, by Care, Temperance, and great Caution, may after a long Sickneſs, and great Weakneſs, be reſtored to their former State and Activity.

VII. To thoſe, who would *diſ*courage Men from all Endeavour to reform their ill Habits, by pretending, that it is equally impoſſible for an habitual Sinner, to do any Action tending to introduce a virtuous Habit; as for a *corrupt Tree to bring forth good Fruit*, it may be anſwered, that Compariſons of this Kind are not to be extended beyond the proper Import and Deſign of them. A corrupt Tree, while it continues in that State, without any Culture or Improvement, *cannot* bring forth good Fruit; yet, if it be well manured, if the dead or ſuperfluous Branches of it be cut off, and it be dreſſed according to the Rules commonly practiſed in like Caſes, may, in Time, recover its former Strength and Fœcundity. As, a good Tree, for

Want

Want of being cultivated, will degenerate, and either produce Fruit in leſs Quantity, or leſs grateful to the Eye, and the Taſte. But though Illuſtrations of this Kind are very proper and inſtructive, in the reſtrained Senſe, wherein they are to be underſtood; we muſt not argue any farther from them; Things that act, by a Neceſſity of Nature, admit of a very different Conſideration, from reaſonable and free Agents; who, if they will exert it, have a congenial Principle of Action, and Culture within themſelves.

VIII. It is a weak Pretence, therefore, of wicked Men, that they have contracted ſuch Habits, as thoſe of Swearing, Lying, or Impurity, that they are unable to correct, or oppoſe them. This Pretence is impious and unjuſt;

not only, as theſe Vices were certainly voluntary in their Cauſes, but alſo, if they will uſe the proper Means, curable in their Effects. So that whether they reflect upon themſelves, as having contracted them, or as continuing in them; they are equally *without Excuſe*.

IX. From this Account of the Habits, I ſhall conclude with obſerving, that Men may, at any Time, really diſcover (and there cannot be a Diſcovery of greater Uſe) what State they are in, with Reſpect to Virtue and *Vice*. In order to a Reſolution in this important Enquiry, they have Nothing to do, but impartially to examine the Nature of their own Actions, and after what Manner they perform them; as whether they are done with Facility or Reluctance? with Conſtancy, or only

only by occaſional, tranſient, or leſs frequent Acts? with a greater, or leſs Degree of Ardour and Reſolution? If they are, in particular, leſs diſpoſed to any virtuous Action, or find themſelves averſe to it; if they are rarely excited to ſet about it, or perform it with Coldneſs and Indifferency, without Alacrity, or that ſenſible Pleaſure, which attends all the Actions of Men, when they act from the Motions of the Heart; they may, then, juſtly conclude, Virtue, in that Reſpect, has very little Power over them; but they are, *certainly*, far from having, as yet, formed any true or ſettled Habit of it. And, by Parity of Reaſon, they may make a deciſive Judgment, when they examine themſelves upon the like Heads of Enquiry, concerning the

the State they are in, with Reſpect to ſinful Habits.

CHAP. XVIII.

Whether a Principle of Honour, in Contradiſtinction to that of moral Virtue, is to be admitted?

I. *A real, and nominal Idea of Honour.* II. *In what Senſe a Diſtinction between Honour and Honeſty, allowable.* III, IV, V. *The Grounds of that Diſtinction farther illuſtrated.* VI, VII. *Whether, on any Occaſion, or in what Reſpects, it may be lawful to diſſemble the Truth.* VIII. *An Opinion of* Grotius

Grotius *upon that Head.* IX, X. *Honour, according to the nominal Idea, or abuſive Senſe of it.* XI, XII, XIII, XIV. *That Senſe exploded.* XV. XVI, XVII, XVIII. *Of Duelling.* XIX, XX. *The Rule, and Advantage of true Honour.* XXI. *Honour, negatively conſidered, and in its due Extent.* XXII, XXIII. *And in Relation to Society.* XXIV, XXV. *Reflections, by Way of Improvement, from what has been ſaid upon the Subject of Honour.*

I. IN order to a Reſolution of this Enquiry, it will be neceſſary to conſider *Honour*, according to the real, and to the popular, or *nominal* Idea of it. In the former Reſpect, Honour always

ways ſuppoſes the Lawfulneſs of our Actions. When we ſay, any Thing is honourable, we only uſe a different Expreſſion to ſignify Something; that is, *Praiſe-worthy and of good Report*. Theſe Terms, therefore, if they are not promiſcuouſly applied; yet, in the natural Conſtruction of them, inſeparably infer one another. For Nothing, in a moral Eſtimation of Things, can deſerve Praiſe, but what is agreeable to the Rules of Morality; Nothing but what is lawful, and *Honeſt*.

II. When we ſpeak, therefore, concerning a Man of Honour, the Lawfulneſs, and Honeſty of his Actions, is always preſuppoſed. And ſo the Difference between a lawful or honeſt, and an honourable Action, does not appear to lie ſo much, in Kind, as

in

in Degree; or, however, to depend on the different Circumſtances, under which ſuch Actions are done. A Man, who acts out of the Simplicity of his Heart, and conſiders, only, whether the Action be, in the Nature of it, ſtrictly lawful, may, in that Reſpect, be termed an honeſt Man; becauſe he does not offend, directly, againſt the Rule of Honeſty, though he may not, perfectly, or in every Reſpect perform it, with all the Graces, or to all the Advantages, whereof it may be, poſſibly, capable. One, for Inſtance, who is juſt to his Promiſe, and faithfully obſerves all his Contracts with other Perſons, is ſo, far an honeſt Man; but a *good Man*, or Man of *Honour*, will even, ſometimes, exceed in what he promiſed; and not merely execute

ecute the Conditions, to which he had obliged himſelf, according to the Letter; but where they may bear too hard upon the other Party contracting, according to an equitable Conſtruction of them; and ſo will have Regard, not only to the Meaſures of ſtrict and legal Juſtice, but to the generous Motions of Liberality and Beneficence.

III. The different Circumſtances, alſo, of doing Things, may cauſe a ſenſible Difference between acts of Honour, and thoſe of Honeſty. A plain Man, who deſigns Nothing more, than barely to diſcharge his Duty, in any Inſtance, ſatisfies himſelf with the Thing done, without nicely examining the Decency, the Propriety, or Advantage of it; whether in Reſpect to the Good of the Publick,

or

or that of private Perſons. Whatſoever Things, therefore, are *lovely*. Whatſoever Things are *true*, whatſoever Things are *pure*, whatſoever Things are of *good Report*, are the proper Rules and Standards of Honour: Whereas, Honeſty, according to its more ſimple and ſeparate Idea, principally reſpects the Nature of the Action, conſidered abſtractly from theſe beautiful and enobling Circumſtances.

IV. It is upon theſe Grounds, we found the Diſtinction between a *righteous*, and a *good* Man; and that certain Duties of moral Life are performed, as having the Force of ſtrict Commands; and others only, as being Counſels of Perfection; wherein there is this material Difference to be obſerved; that Matters, indeed, of ſtrict

ſtrict Duty, oblige at all Times, and in all Places: But Matters, which relate only to the exterior Form or Dignity of the Action, changing under different Circumſtances, there is a greater Latitude, or rather Liberty of Diſcretion, in the Uſe of them. What is, in the Nature of it, unlawful, can never be done at any Time; but that may be decent, comely, and praiſe-worthy, at one Time, which, on another, would be very improper, and unbecoming, on all theſe Accounts, though *not*, ſtrictly, unlawful.

V. But, though an unlawful Action may never be done, it does not, therefore, follow, that a lawful Action may always be done. It is a common Notion, indeed, that Men may do, without Scruple or Blame, what

no expreſs Law has reſtrained them from doing. As to Circumſtances of Decency or Fitneſs, they think themſelves under no moral Obligation to regard them; eſpecially, where they run no Hazard of their Reputation, or their temporal Intereſts. But theſe are only Rules to Men, to uſe the ſofteſt Terms, of vulgar and mean Spirits; and who are altogether Strangers to the Principles of a more exact and refined Morality. A Perſon, who has any juſt Senſe of the Dignity of human Nature, the Intereſts of Religion, the Good of Mankind, and the Honour of God, will reſtrain himſelf in a thouſand Inſtances, from doing ſuch Things; which yet, conſidered, ſimply, in themſelves, might lawfully be done.

VI. Among the Meaſures, whereby a Man of Honour, by which, according to my Notion of Honour, I underſtand only a more exalted State of Virtue, ariſing commonly from a ſuperior Force and Greatneſs of Mind; I mentioned ſuch Things as are *true*: which, perhaps, may occaſion ſome Scruple in my Readers, as if I ſuppoſed *Truth*, not ſtrictly as being of neceſſary Obligation; but among the Things, wherein that Liberty may be uſed, which is ſometimes neceſſary to a more *perfect* State of Virtue.

VII. To prevent any Miſconſtruction of this Kind, I would obſerve, that *Truth* may be conſidered, as oppoſed to *Lying* and Deceit, negatively, or poſitively. In the latter Senſe, it can never be

be lawful, under any Circumſtances, to aſſert a downright and, eſpecially, a pernicious Falſhood. But it yet may, ſometimes, be lawful to diſguiſe or conceal the Truth. And in reſpect to this negative Acceptation of Truth, a a Man, without directly offending againſt it, may often uſe a greater Liberty of Diſcretion. And, accordingly, ſeveral great Authorities are cited by *Grotius* *, to ſhew, and among the reſt, that of *Cicero*, in ſeveral Places; that it is lawful, eſpecially, in Perſons entruſted with the publick Adminiſtration, on many Occaſions, to uſe Artifice in diſſembling the Truth. But, however, this Liberty may be contended for, it is more laudable, generous, more a-

* *De Jur. Bell & Pac. Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 1.

greeable to the Dignity of human Nature, and, in all theſe Reſpects, to the Rules of *Honour*, that Men ſhould never have Recourſe to Diſſimulation; that being, confeſſedly, an Argument of Imbecillity, accompanied with Fear and Diſtruſt. And, therefore, *Plato*, who allows the Uſe of it, in certain Caſes, to Men, yet juſtly acknowledgeth, that God, notwithſtanding his ſovereign Dominion over Men, cannot make uſe of ſuch a Refuge; as always implying a tacit Confeſſion of Weakneſs. So that when *Cicero*, in another Place, aſſerts, that Fraud and Diſſimulation ought to be baniſhed out of human Life, to make him conſiſtent with himſelf we muſt ſuppoſe, he ſpeaks here agreeably to the Diſtinction, which occurs ſo often in his admirable Book of *Offices*;

Offices; where he puts a Difference between ſuch Things and Actions as are, ſimply, lawful, and ſuch as are really laudable. The Neceſſity of Affairs, in the Commonwealth, may, ſometimes, poſſibly, render it no indirect Breach of moral Honeſty, to diſſemble the Truth; but ſtill it is more *honourable*, in every State of Life, private or publick, to avoid the very Appearances of Falſhood; and to reſtrain our ſelves from the Uſe of a Liberty, which, however, it may be ſucceſsfully employed, is, at the beſt, but an ignoble, and inglorious Means of Succeſs.

VIII. And, therefore, *Grotius* having enumerated the ſeveral Authorities and Arguments, commonly, uſed to excuſe, or defend, political Lying; to correct the ill Impreſſions, which Men of

more looſe Principles might make from ſuch Conceſſions, delivers himſelf like a Caſuiſt, who had a Senſe of *Honour*, as well as Juſtice, in the following Words: "We know there are ſome Kinds "of *Deceit*, which tho' naturally "permitted, yet are condemned "and exploded by ſeveral Per- "ſons; not ſtrictly on Account "of their *Unlawfulneſs*, but out "of a certain Grandeur of Mind, "and ſometimes from a ſecret "Conſciouſneſs of their own "*Strength*". Which Opinion he confirms by ſeveral remarkable Authorities, eſpecially in reſpect to Princes, from the beſt of the ancient Moraliſts; and his Citations from them deſerve very well to be conſulted.

IX. Having thus endeavoured to ſtate the true Notion of Honour, my

my next Buſineſs is to ſhew, what the popular, or *nominal* Idea of it, does, ordinarily, import?

X. And here, there is a proper Occaſion of obſerving, that the moſt common Terms are often the moſt confuſed and ambiguous. Every Man, becauſe they are frequently uſed in Converſation, or Writing, apprehends, he perfectly underſtands them; while few annex to them the ſame Ideas, and others appear to have no certain or diſtinct Idea of them at all. Among ſeveral Words of this Kind, which Uſe has made current, without impreſſing any *real* Character upon them; ſuch as Conſcience, Liberty, publick Good, and Loyalty; and, in ſome Caſes, Law and Juſtice itſelf, I am here, particularly to add, that of *Honour*; than which, if

we conſider it in its true Notion, and as inſeparable from Honeſty, Nothing is more intelligible. But if we conſider it in the abuſive Senſe, wherein wicked Men frequently agree to expreſs it; and even, ſometimes, Men who would be thought to conduct themſelves by the Rules of Conſcience and Religion, Nothing is more irreconcileable to Reaſon.

XI. It is abſurd to ſuppoſe, that any voluntary Agreement, or Compact of Men, ſhould oblige them, whatever the Pretence may be, to an unlawful Action; they being already under an antecedent and contrary Obligation to that univerſal Law of reaſonable Beings, which alone ought to be obeyed, abſolutely, and without Reſerve. No Man can be obliged to an Impoſſibility;

now

now, in a juſt Way of Reaſoning, with reſpect to moral Agents, what cannot, lawfully, be done, is *impoſſible* to be done.

XII. And, therefore, all Caſuiſts are agreed, that no Engagements of any Kind, not thoſe confirmed by the moſt ſolemn Promiſes, Oaths, or Aſſeverations, can be of any Force to oblige againſt the natural Reaſon, or Equity of Things. For, otherwiſe, it would follow, that a Combination of wicked Men, in promoting any unjuſt Deſign, might vacate the Laws of the ſupreme Legiſlator: And that, in ſuch Caſes, it would be reaſonable to *hearken unto Men, more than unto God:* Which Principle being admitted, it would, at any Time, depend on ſuperior Force and Numbers, to eſtabliſh a quite different Scheme of

of Morality, from that, which *before* had really, and, perhaps, *in* all Ages, obtained; and may, in the Courſe of a few Years, obtain again, in the very Place, where it was before proſcribed. For if the Diſtinction of Virtue and Vice, of Honour, or Infamy, are only founded in human Compact; the governing Part of the World will have the ſame Power to vary the Notions of Virtue and Vice, of Praiſe and Blame, as they will have of making arbitrary Laws, concerning Things that are *only* founded on mere prudential Conſiderations. So that Men would be at a continual Loſs to know, whether Truth and Juſtice, Sobriety and Chaſtity; to which the Idea of Praiſe and Virtue are now affixed; would not, in ſome future Time, when the Legiſlature ſhould

ſo

ſo enact, juſtly expoſe Men to Puniſhment and Diſgrace.

XIII. No Obligation, for theſe Reaſons, can lie upon a Man in Point of Honour, by Virtue of any human Conſtitution or Authority whatever, to an Action, notoriouſly, ſinful: This can admit no Diſpute. But there is another falſe Notion of Honour, which, ſometimes, obtains among Perſons of weak, or ill-informed Minds, which ought, alſo, to be removed. It is common for Men, when they have once, openly, committed ſome Error or Folly, to think themſelves obliged in Honour, and that they may avoid the Reproach of Levity or Inconſtancy, to proceed in it. So that though their Hearts ſecretly accuſe them of Temerity, or Indiſcretion; yet they

they will defend what they have ſaid, or done: And the Defence of their Conduct, frequently, is worſe, and expoſes them to greater Cenſure, than the very Fault, wherewith they are charged. As a Perſon once guilty, or ſuſpected to be guilty, of a Lye; to avoid Detection, often, brings himſelf under a Neceſſity of covering it, by a Train of additional Lies, or, perhaps, of horrid Imprecations.

XIV. And if a Notion of Honour cannot oblige againſt Reaſons of Prudence, or in reſpect to ſuch Things, as have, perhaps, Nothing directly criminal in them; much leſs can it oblige to any Acts of Injuſtice, to the Prejudice, or Provocation of other Perſons; notwithſtanding Cuſtom may, in great Meaſure, have leſſened

leſſened the Infamy, wherewith ſuch Acts ought to have been, and would have been, otherwiſe, attended.

XV. I refer, here, to that falſe Notion of Honour, which puts Men upon revenging themſelves, where any real, or imaginary, Indignity is offered them, by ſhedding the Blood of the Offender: No leſs a Sacrifice being thought ſufficient to attone for the Injuries they have ſuſtained. I do not, here, inquire, how far, in a State of Nature, and Independency, one Man may have a Power over the Body, or Life, of another, where he is violently attacked, in his Perſon, or Reputation; and cannot, otherwiſe, defend either of them, but by repelling his Adverſary by Violence. But where Men are incorporated into

into regular Societies, and *have* ſubmitted to be governed by *certain* Laws, which take Cognizance of all Offences, that may ariſe among them; to the Deciſion whereof, the Judgment, concerning ſuch Offences, is referred. In this Caſe, for a private Perſon, to take the Power of the Sword into his own Hands, upon any Pretence, is, directly, to make himſelf a *Ruler*, and a *Judge*; and to tranſgreſs the Laws, in the higheſt Inſtance of Contempt and Diſobedience, that of inva*ding* the Right, the proper Right, of the civil Magiſtrate.

XVI. Now, an Obligation to all human Laws, ſo far as they are juſt and equitable, being founded in the Laws of Nature and Reaſon, they have, conſequently, in them the Force of a

divine

divine Law. And the ſame Argument, whereby we prove that Nothing, which is contrary to the natural Law, can be agreeable to the Laws of Honour, will invincibly prove, that *Honour* can never oblige us to act in Breach of thoſe human Laws, to which we profeſs, and owe, Subjection.

XVII. I will add, that even, abſtracting from human Laws, and, on Suppoſition, that a certain Number of Men ſhould meet, or be caſt fortuitouſly, upon any Part of the uninhabited World, where upon their firſt Congreſs, no one could pretend to have any Power, or Authority, over another; yet, even here, in Caſe of any Injury offered, the Party injured could have no Right to demand, or ſeek, Reparation, except

cept in a reaſonable Degree of Proportion to the Injury done to him. For though he is not reſtrained by any poſitive Compact, to which they have by Conſent ſubmitted; ſtill the common Law of Reaſon, of Humanity, and Charity; that Law, in particular, of not doing to another what, in a ſuppoſed Change of Circumſtances, a Man would not have done to himſelf; a Law, univerſally, binding in every State and Condition of Life, will oblige him, not to extend his Demands of Satisfaction, beyond the Degree of ſuch Injury, as he hath received. Nay, he will rather, in many Caſes of leſs Concernment, chuſe to *ſuffer Wrong*, and even to recede from thoſe Methods of Retaliation, which he might, in ſtrict Juſtice, take, than endea-

vour to revenge himſelf, for ſlight or trival Offences.

XVIII. Would Men, in civil Society, moderate their Paſſions and Reſentments, by theſe Rules, they would not, ſo readily, work themſelves up, or fly out (eſpecially, when the Injury apprehended, or received, is inconſiderable) into thoſe violent Heats, which Nothing but Blood can allay; and which frequently, therefore, terminate in their own, or their Adverſaries Death; and, ſometimes, in the Deſtruction of both; and that upon a vain fantaſtick Notion, of what they call Honour: Which, ſaith, *the excellent* Grotius, *upon this Subject:* " appears no leſs contrary to Reaſon, than the Maxims of ſound Piety. For Honour, importing an Idea of ſome Excellency

" and Merit; he that can *put*
" up an Affront, diſcovering a
" Superiority of Mind, as being
" above the Senſe of it, rather
" augments his Honour, than
" does any Thing to the Di-
" minution of it. Neither is it
" of any Significancy, that ſome
" Men, through a corrupt Judg-
" ment, traduce this Virtue with
" falſe and opprobrious Names.
" For the Errors, or falſe Judg-
" ments, of weak, or wicked
" Men, do not alter the Nature
" of Things. Neither are *they*,
" who believe the Chriſtian Re-
" velation, only, of this Opinion;
" but even the Philoſophers have
" argued, from a common Prin-
" ciple of natural Reaſon, that
" it is the Sign of a weak, mean,
" or effeminate Soul in Man,

not

" not to be able to bear Injuries *."

XIX. I would not, hereby, inſinuate, as if Men could be too cautious in preſerving their Honour; provided, this may be done in a juſt and honourable Way. But Honour, as every Thing elſe, that is excellent, ought to have ſome diſtinct Characteriſtick, whereby it may be known and aſcertained. Now, by what Rule can we ſo properly try and examine a Quality, wherein ſome peculiar Perogative of a human Mind is ſuppoſed to lie; as by that Reaſon, whereby human Nature, itſelf, is dignified and diſtinguiſhed? that Reaſon, by acting in Conformity to which, we

* Grot. *De Jur. Bell. & Pac. Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 1. *p.* 10.

alone approach nearer to the Original Source of all Excellency.

XX. Nothing is, therefore, here intended to the Diminution of Honour, in the true, but only in the improper, or abuſive, Notion of it. No Character, indeed, is of ſuch Importance, I do not ſay, toward effecting our more private Deſigns (an Advantage, by no Means, in itſelf, contemptible) but towards a happy Conduct, and Execution, of any great, or publick, Enterprize. This is ſo viſible, *that let* two Perſons of equal Fortune, Capacity, or Addreſs, expreſs themſelves in the ſame Terms; give the ſame Advice; and negotiate the ſame Affair; yet what they ſay, or do, ſhall operate, after a very different Manner; or be attended, with very different Succeſs,

Succeſs, as they are differently *thought* of, or eſteemed. If we entertain a good Opinion of any Perſon, or conſider him as a *Man of Honour*, all his Motions are well received; all his Actions ſuppoſed to proceed from good Motives, to be conducted by the wiſeſt Means, and to proſecute the beſt Ends. His Advice, his Perſuaſions, his very Reproofs, find an eaſy Acceſs to the Heart. But a Perſon, who lies under any Calumny, or Suſpicions, cannot exert himſelf to the Benefit of others, even when his Meaſures are well concerted, his Admonitions juſt, and his Deſigns and Actions prudently conducted, without committing ſome Kind of Violence upon them.

XXIt is not, therefore, ſufficient to a Man, who would ren-

der himſelf, in any ſuperior Degree, uſeful, or conſiderable, in Society, that he ſhould be *negatively* honeſt, or honourable; that is, conduct himſelf after ſuch a Manner, as not *to* offend, directly, or openly, againſt publick Fame; it is incumbent on him, if he will preſerve that Degree of Eſteem in the World, which will give him any Weight, or Authority in his Station, not only to *provide Things honeſt in the Sight of God, and Men*; but to *approve the Things that are excellent*.

XXII. I will here add, that Honour always ſuppoſes ſome Quality, or Action, more peculiarly, relating to Men, conſidered as Members of Society. And, therefore, the Signification of it is properly reſtrained to ſuch Inſtances

ſtances of our Duty, whereby we promote, in one Kind, or other, the Good of other Men; or diſcover, at leaſt, a generous Diſpoſition, where we want Power, to that End. A Man of Piety, of Meekneſs, and Sobriety, will, on account of theſe Qualities, render himſelf accepted of God, and approved of Men; but the more proper Subjects of *Honour*, are Acts of Juſtice, whether commutative, or diſtributive; and, *eſpecially*, of Beneficence. And the Idea of Honour, indeed, is ſo reſtrained to theſe Subjects, that the Character of it is, in a Manner, by common Uſe, appropriated to Perſons of Diſtinction in the World; who have larger Abilities, on one Account, or other, and a wider Compaſs, with more

Occaſions of doing Good, in civil Life.

XXIII. From which Conſideration, a farther Argument may be formed, to ſhew, that Honour ought never to be ſeparated from Honeſty; as all Perſons in Proportion to the Advantages they enjoy, of a more liberal Education, and improved Underſtanding, are under a ſtronger Obligation to aſſert, recommend, and exemplify, a ſtrict Morality.

XXIV. It appears, then, without any long Recapitulation of what has been ſaid upon this Head, that Honour, when diſtinguiſhed from moral Virtue, is not, in Reality, any Character, really, ſeparable from it, but only imports a different Manner of conceiving moral Virtue, particularly,

larly, in reſpect to the Branches of it juſt before mentioned, *Juſtice*, and *Beneficence*. Honour, therefore, in the Language of wicked Men, who acknowledge not a real Diſtinction of Virtue and Vice, of lawful, or unlawful, but what ariſes from common Opinion, ſeems to be one of the moſt pernicious Principles, that the human Mind is capable of entertaining. For, in this Way of Reaſoning, a Man of Honour, as he is called, can only be obliged to conſult his external Reputation. No human Laws, or Compacts, can reach the Heart, or lay any Obligation upon the Conſcience. Nothing can do this, but the internal Monitor, which ſpeaks, continually, within us; the ſilent, and ſtill Voice whereof is heard in our greateſt Privacies,

and Retirements. But to one who diſowns the Power and Authority of this internal Monitor, He cannot be of the leaſt Uſe, or Sgnificancy. And, therefore, the Man of Honour, according to his Notion of Honour, may commit, without Shame, or Remorſe, the moſt unjuſt and abominable Actions, provided he can do it with Security, and in private, that is, without offending againſt publick Fame, or what the World has agreed, at preſent, to call Honour; whatever may happen to be called ſo, in any Time *future*; for the Opinion of the World, if there be no real Difference in the Nature of Things, cannot affect the Nature of them; ſo that a Man is at Liberty, provided he can eſcape the Eye, or Cenſure, of the World; to act, in ſuch a

Caſe,

Caſe, as private Paſſion, or Intereſt, ſhall direct him. This Opinion, therefore, which deſtroys all the inward Reſtraints of Honour, (and it is eaſy, on a thouſand Occaſions, to evade the outward) is ſo *pernicious*, that I do not know, whether it be of more fatal Conſequence in moral Life, to ſay there is no God; than to acknowledge the Being of a God, and to aſſert, at the ſame Time, he has given no certain, or ſtated, Rules; no Rules, but what depend upon the mutable Humour, or Opinions, of Men, for the Conduct of moral Life.

XXV. I do not ſay, but that ſome Men have naturally ſo good and generous Diſpoſitions, that they cannot eaſily do a baſe, or unjuſt Action, without offering much

much Violence to themſelves. And it muſt be owned, this *Diſpoſition* does often carry Men, not otherwiſe very ſcrupulous in Matters of Conſcience, a great Way, in all the Appearances of Honour. But it is not to be depended upon, eſpecially, in Caſes of Extremity, which much affect us, except it be animated and enforced with that internal Principle, of which I have been ſpeaking. We may call Honour, in ſuch Perſons, Humour, Faſhion, good Nature, Senſibility of Temper, a higher *Fermentation* of the Blood, or ſome other occaſional Cauſe, of giving a more violent Agitation to the Spirits, whereby the Soul is powerfully affected. But, Nothing, to conclude, can deſerve the Name of

true

true Honour, but what is founded in *Reaſon* and *Conſcience.*

CHAP. XIX.

Some hiſtorical Obſervations, upon the Progreſs of moral Philoſophy, among the Ancients; and concerning their Authority.

I. *The general Principle upon which the Author proceeds.* II. *The Morality of Chriſtian Writers the moſt pure, and perfect.* III, IV. *Yet that of Philoſophers, in a State of natural Religion, the proper Subject of Inquiry at preſent.* V. *What we owe to them.* VI, VII,

VII, VIII, IX. *Of the Stoicks; particularly*, Zeno, Chryſippus, *and* Seneca. X, XI, XII. *Of* Socrates, Plato, Ariſtotle, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI. *And* Cicero.

I. I Proceed, every where, upon this Principle; that Reaſon is the proper Rule of human Judgment, and Action. Reaſon, whereby a Man endeavours to diſcover the true Nature of Things, with the ſeveral Relations, wherein they ſtand towards one another; and, thereupon, having formed the Scheme of his Conduct, determines effectually to follow it. To this End, every Man muſt aſſert that natural inherent Right of judging for himſelf, from which no Man, conſidered as a reaſonable Agent, is excluded. But it is very conſiſtent with private Judgment, that

that we ſhould inquire, eſpecially, in more nice and intricate Caſes, relating to moral Life, (ſince the Reaſon of all Duties is not equally evident) what has been the Opinion of other Men concerning them? eſpecially, of of ſuch Men, if they can be found, who have had, for Ages paſt, an eſtabliſhed Reputation throughout the World, for their great Wiſdom, and Knowledge.

II. Were I thought worthy to be conſulted, by any Perſon, upon ſuch an Inquiry, I ſhould direct him to ſeveral ancient *Chriſtian* Writers; yet not, ſtrictly, under that Character, or as they confirm the moral Truths and Inſtructions delivered in their Writings, by a divine Authority; but becauſe there is certainly to be diſcovered in them, without any

Regard

Regard to divine Authority, a more ſtrict, pure, and perſpicuous, a more uniform and conſiſtent Scheme of Morality, than can be found in the moral Tracts of any ancient Heathen Writer whatever: Which Aſſertion, tho' it be not admitted, neither, in this Place, do I deſign it ſhould be admitted, as an Argument, to prove the divine Inſpiration of the holy Scriptures; yet it is a very ſtrong Argument in Proof of their Excellency and Perfection, as a Rule of moral Life.

III. But ſince he, who ſhould move the Queſtion, might poſſibly except againſt Chriſtian Writers, as being prepoſſeſſed with Chriſtian Principles, and, conſequently, as leſs equal, or competent Judges in the Caſe. I ſhould, in the next Place, propoſe to lead him

him into the philoſophical World, not to take a minute and diſtinct Survey of it; that would be an Attempt of more Trouble and Curioſity, than Uſe; but only to make ſuch tranſient Diſcoveries, upon which ſome general Account might be given, concerning the Temper and Produce of the Country.

IV. And here to quit the Metaphor, and examine the Thing in a plain and natural Manner, it is readily granted, that we find, in the Writings of the Philoſophers, many excellent Rules and Precepts, here and there diſperſed, for the Conduct of moral Life. And if they did not always reſolve thoſe Precepts into their true and proper Grounds, it was not from any invincible Defect in human Reaſon, but for

Want of particular Attention, in themſelves; or, becauſe they did not make that Uſe, in every Reſpect, they might have made of thoſe reaſoning Powers, wherewith God had endowed them. For human Reaſon is the ſame in all Ages: The great Difference lies in the Exerciſe and Application of it; which, tho' it much depends on the native Strength, or Liberty, of our own Minds; may, yet, produce different Diſcoveries, in different Ages, relating to Morality, by Means of ſeveral accidental Cauſes, under the Direction of divine Providence.

V. It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that with all the new Lights, that are now afforded to us in moral Philoſophy, we

owe

owe very much to the ancient moral Writers; if not for the Purity and Strictneſs of their Rules, yet for the lively, beautiful, and natural Manner, wherewith they did ſo happily embelliſh, and recommend them.

VI. It ſeems, indeed, much more difficult to reſolve, why the Philoſophers have not left us any juſt, or perfect, Syſtem of Morality; than, why many of them, celebrated for their great Wiſdom and Learning, ſo groſly erred, concerning ſome of the moſt fundamental, and even common, Duties of moral Life;

The Morality of the Stoicks, more ſtrict, than *pure* or *perfect*, was, particularly, taught by *Zeno* and *Chryſippus*, as two of the *grand Maſters*, or Heads of that Sect, if the former was not the original

Founder of it. Yet we are *not* to expect much Light from him, towards diſcovering either the true Principles, or the proper Duties of Morality. His Way of reaſoning, upon all Subjects, being rather to amuſe and perplex, than to eſtabliſh any Thing, *as* certain. His Buſineſs was to take the Field, and fight againſt all Comers; and if he could not ſubdue his Adverſaries by main Strength, to circumvent them by any Artifice, or Stratagem, that a ſubtle and ready Wit *could* ſupply. When he ſet *himſelf* to confute an Opinion, or baffle an Opponent, all he propoſed was to triumph, without Regard to the Truth, to the Probability, or even Poſſibility of the Matter in Conteſt: And, upon this Account, *Seneca*, enumerating ſeveral abſurd

ſurd Doctrines, advanced by the Scepticks, repreſents none of them ſo extravagant in his Notions, as *Zeno*. Some of them denied the Truth of one Thing, ſome of another; but, * according to *Zeno*, there was no Truth or Certainty in any Thing. It cannot be pretended, this Obſervation ought to be confined to Subjects of natural Philoſophy; ſince *Sextus Empericus* has proved, both, according to *Zeno*, and *Chryſippus*, that there is no real, or certain, Difference between Virtue and Vice. We are not to be ſurprized, if upon ſuch an uncertain and fluctuating Scheme, theſe two Fathers of the Stoical Sect, erred very much, when they came to explain them-

* *Si Zenoni, ne unum quidem. Senec. Ep.* 88.

ſelves upon particular moral Duties: That the former of them, for Inſtance, taught, Men ought to permit, to one another, a promiſcuous Uſe of their Wives; and is violently ſuſpected to have practiſed, if he did not teach, a Sin which ought not to be named: That the latter of them aſſerted the Lawfulneſs of an inceſtous Commerce, between Perſons in the firſt Degrees of Conſanguinity; and that both of them filled their Writings with ſuch obſcene Paſſages, *which* could not be read by Perſons, *who* had any Senſe of Shame, or Modeſty.

VII. The ſucceeding Stoicks being ſenſible, that according to the primitive and fundamental Doctrines of that Sect, the Honour of it could not, poſſibly, be defended,

defended, endeavoured, in ſome Meaſure, to reform and ſoften them; and to bring them nearer to the Principles of a pure Morality: Particularly, about the Time when the Chriſtian Doctrine began to ſpread, and to enlighten the World. Yet the Notion that all Crimes are equal, as that it was indifferent in the *Nature* and *Reaſon* of the Thing, whether a Man ſhould murther his Father *, or kill a Cock, did ſtill, generally, obtain among them.

VIII. An Affectation of Subtlety ſeems, indeed, to have been, no leſs, the Character of *Chryſippus*, than of *Zeno*; but it, ſometimes, engaged him in Difficulties, out of which he could find

* *Tull. pro. Murena.*

no Way of extricating himſelf. He would propoſe Objections with ſuch Force, and in ſo good a Light, that his Anſwers were neither, always, ſo ſolid, nor ſo clear, as to oblige an Aſſent to the contrary Opinion. At other Times, he advanced Notions, not ſo much unworthy of a Philoſopher, as altogether chimerical; as that Virtue and Vice, Arts and Sciences, were corporeal, and rational Animals; which, beſides, the Temerity of the Aſſertion, without Proof, or the leaſt Appearance of Probability, *by uniting* the Ideas of corporeal, and rational, in the ſame Subject, Ideas the moſt foreign, and incompatible in Nature, is, of itſelf, ſufficient to diſcover to us, that with all his Subtlety, this Philoſopher did not propoſe it as a

Rule

Rule to himſelf, always to argue, from clear and diſtinct Ideas. Moſt of the Abſurdities, indeed, and Paradoxes, objected by *Plutarch*, againſt the Stoicks, are taken from *Chryſippus*.

IX. Among all the Stoicks, no Perſon appears to have endeavoured more to recommend Morality in its full Compaſs and Extent, or to have made greater Improvements in the *Theory* of it, than *Seneca*. Yet, he has rather declaimed, like a Man of Wit and Experience, againſt Vice, than eſtabliſhed moral Virtue, upon its true Foundation. He underſtood the Strength, and Defects of human Nature; and knew, how to adorn his Subject with all thoſe Ornaments, which were proper to ſet it off to Advantage; but,

but, deſigning, if we may judge concerning his Intention, from the Effect of his Writings, rather to ſurprize and pleaſe, than to convince, he ſeldom went to the Bottom of Things, or reduced the fine and beautiful Reflections, wherewith he abounds, to any true, or certain Standard. This being the Character of a Perſon, much celebrated for his moral Writings, which are in the Hands of many Chriſtians, and in ſeveral Languages, I think my ſelf obliged to confirm it by two Authorities, againſt which, there will lie no Exception; the firſt is from *Seneca* himſelf, as cited by St. *Auſtin*; who, on Occaſion of what he had written, concerning certain impure, and wicked Rites of Pagan Superſtition, repreſents him, ſaying, that a wiſe Man will conform

form to thoſe Rites, not on Account of their being acceptable to God, but in Obedience to human Laws *; founding the Obligation of obſerving them, not in the Law of Nature, but in poſitive Inſtitution, contrary to the Law of Nature. † The other Authority is that of *Quintilian*, whoſe Character of this Moraliſt imports, that tho' he had an excellent Faculty of expoſing the Vices of Mankind; yet he was far from being exact in his Reſearches, conſidered, ſtrictly, as a Philoſopher.

X. But may we not expect greater Diſcoveries, in Morality, from thoſe three ſhining Lights which appeared in the philoſophical World, in the ſame Age;

* *S. Auſ. Civ. Dei. L. 6. C. 10.*

† *In Philoſophia parum diligens, egregius tamen vitiorum inſectator. Inſt. L. 10. C. 18.*

So-

Socrates, *Plato*, and *Ariſtotle*? As to the former, if we conſider moral Philoſophy, as reduced into a Method for the Conduct of humah Life; or as a uſeful and practical Part of Knowledge; the greateſt Improvements, to that End, have been aſcribed to him. Before his Time, the Principles of it lay looſe and diſperſed, in certain ſhort Aphoriſms or Sentences, without any regular, much leſs, any entire Dependence of one Thing upon another. But whatever Improvements this excellent Perſon made in the moral, and practical Parts of Philoſophy, they appear to have been, ſolely, owing to the Light of his own Mind; for, ſince he did not travel, as others of his Country Men did, in Search of Knowledge abroad, neither was there any Occaſion, that

that he ſhould take this Method, in order to inform himſelf, concerning that, which by attending to the common Principles of natural Reaſon, he might, at any Time, diſcover, in his cloſeſt Retirements; and the ſooner, for being retired. Yet we know little of his Diſcourſes, upon moral, or other Subjects, but what has been tranſmitted down to us, in the Writings of *Plato*, and *Xenophon*; the former of whom, eſpecially, is ſuppoſed to have made him the Author of ſeveral * Things which he never ſaid. From whom, however, it appears, how orthodox ſoever, generally ſpeaking, *Socrates* has been in his Doctrine relating to Morality itſelf, yet in the Method he took to propagate it, he diſcovered

* *Aul. Gell. L. 14. C. 3.*

much

much Diffidence, and Uncertainty.

XI. *Plato* improved, upon the Principles of this Philoſopher; but, notwithſtanding the eaſy, flow, the happy Cadence, and Beauty of his Expreſſion; he is not, always, perfectly clear in his Sentiments: Concerning which, therefore, we muſt, ſometimes, ſatisfy our ſelves, at laſt, with making the moſt probable Conjectures. But the Difficulty we are under, of finding out his Meaning, in certain Caſes, does not afford ſo juſt Matter of Regret, or Complaint, as certain groſs and notorious Errors which occur in his Writings. For he not only held, with *Socrates*, a Community of *Wives* lawful; but he delivered it as his Opinion, that

that Infants might lawfully be deſtroyed, or expoſed to ſtarve. And, herein, he is followed by *Ariſtotle*, who yet might, *here*, have found a much better, and more juſt Cauſe, of contradicting him, than on ſeveral other Occaſions, which he affects to improve to that End. What ſeems more unaccountable is, that *Plutarch*, who had, with much Care, examined, and confuted, the Errors of ſeveral other moral Writers; yet, ſpeaking concerning the Laws of *Lycurgus*, obſerves, he found Nothing in them repugnant to the Laws of Juſtice, or Honeſty: And, yet, not only, theſe two Errors, relating to a Community of Wives, and the Murthering of Infants, if weak or ſickly; but Theft, alſo, was legitimated by thoſe Laws.

XII. *Ari-*

XII. *Ariſtotle* hath, indeed, left us a methodical Syſtem of Morality, wherein moſt of the Duties relating to private, and ſocial, Life, are, according to his Scheme, very well deduced and eſtabliſhed; but, beſides, that in his *Ethicks*, as in his other Works. He is, ſometimes, obſcure; if he did not really affect to hide himſelf, as there is Reaſon to believe, from the Apology he made to *Alexander*, for the Publication of ſome of his Books, contrary to the Sentiments of *that* Hero; "That they were publiſhed, and, "in Effect, not publiſhed, becauſe "not intelligible". It may be, farther, obſerved, concerning *Ariſtotle*, in common with other Philoſophers, that he never eſtabliſhed the Truths of Morality, upon their true and proper Grounds;

Grounds; or hath ſhewed the Obligation we are under to practiſe them, in Conformity to the Will of God; the Reaſonableneſs, and Piety, of imitating him, in all his imitable Perfections; and from a Conſideration of future Rewards, and Puniſhments.

XIII. *Cicero*, himſelf, was deficient, in not giving theſe ſeveral Sanctions, to the Duties of moral Life. And, therefore, it may be ſaid, concerning thoſe admirable Rules of Virtue, which he hath laid down in his Works, that there is a great deal more Beauty in them, than Strength; that they want that Force, which they would have had, to perſuade, had he ſuperſtructed upon the true, and ſure Foundations of Virtue. Even, in a Court of publick Judicature, where he was

pleading, he endeavoured to expoſe the Doctrine, concerning a future State of Puniſhment to wicked Men, as a groundleſs Fiction *. And, on another Occaſion, this grave and learned Orator did not think it inconſiſtent with his Character, in either Reſpect, openly, to apologize, for the criminal and impure Liberties, wherewith *M. Celius* was charged: Not, as, it might have been expected, a Philoſopher would have attempted, at leaſt to do, from the Nature or Reaſon of Things; but merely, from the Licentiouſneſs of the Age, and former Cuſtom, and Connivance. Which was, in Effect, to teach, before the greateſt Audience, at that Time, in the World; that where Men have

* *Pro Cluentio.*

been

been able, by Means of ſuperior Force, or Numbers, to introduce, or ſupport, any wicked Cuſtom, contrary to natural Order, or the Law of God; ſuch Cuſtom, and conſequently, Men, ought to be obeyed, rather than God.

XIV. We are not to be ſurprized, if a Perſon, who did not carry his Reſearches after moral Virtue, to the true Original of it, and where it is only to be found, was eaſily retained to plead for a looſe Morality; and that, after all the excellent Rules he hath laid down, for the Conduct of moral Life, he was ſcarce ſure, or poſitive in any Thing. I ſhall give a remarkable Inſtance, of the doubtful, and inſecure Grounds, upon which he proceeded in his moral Philoſophy, from what I ſhall, preſently, obſerve, relating to

Carneades. In the mean Time, I have no Deſign, on any Account, to detract from *Cicero*'s Merit, or the Glory, whereof he has been ſo juſtly poſſeſſed, in all ſucceeding Ages, and among the beſt Judges, for the many admirable Maxims, relating to moral Life, which he has interſperſed in all his Works; but, whereof, in his Book of *Offices*, he has formed a very regular, and beautiful, Plan; though he has no where, as hath been obſerved, eſtabliſhed Morality upon its true *Baſis*; nor, always, upon the beſt Principles, which himſelf has, ſometimes, advanced. An Argument, that his Notions were fluctuating, and uncertain; as *thoſe*, of all Men, naturally are, who build either upon falſe, or more precarious Grounds.

XV. Moſt

XV. Moſt of the Arguments, which he employs to eſtabliſh, and recommend moral Virtue, are taken from the Convenieney of it, with Reſpect to the Tranquillity of the Mind, or the Health of the Body; to our Eaſe, our Reputation, or Intereſt, in the Commerce we maintain with other Men. All theſe are very proper, and reaſonable Topicks of Perſuaſion, becauſe they, ſeverally, ſuppoſe ſome phyſical Good; to which moral Good naturally tends, and which it has, indeed, a very powerful Influence to promote. But yet theſe are Motives, wherewith, as they are founded in Conſiderations merely prudential and temporary, very wicked Men, even Men, who believe Nothing of a

God, or Religion, may be, in certain Caſes, much affected.

XVI. That, upon which *Cicero* appears to lay the greateſt Streſs, towards ſecuring the *Intereſts* of Virtue, is a Senſe of Glory. His Sentiments upon this Head were ſublime, and agreeable, to his Character, as a *Roman*; but, beſides, the Influence which the Genius of his Country, and the Principles of his Education, might be preſumed to have upon him, in this Reſpect; his violent Thirſt after Praiſe ſeems to have proceeded, in great Meaſure, from Conſtitution. It was owing to this Motive, that when he deſired *Lucceius* to write the Hiſtory of his Adminiſtration, he authorized him, plainly, to neglect the Rules of hiſtorical Truth,

Truth, in his Favour. He wrote on the ſame Occaſion, as if there had been Nothing new, or exceptionable in the Requeſt to his Friend *Atticus*. The Account, of this his irregular Ambition, remains; while the Hiſtory of his Adminiſtration, if it was ever written, hath periſhed.

CHAP. XX.

An Argument of Carneades, *relating to the Subject of moral Virtue, particularly, conſidered.*

I. *A general Character of this Philoſopher.* II. *His Argument propoſed.* III. Cicero

had too formidable Apprehenſions of it. IV, V. *What might have been ſaid in Anſwer to it.* VI, VII. *The Rights of Nature, and the Law of Nature, diſtinguiſhed.* VIII. IX, X. *The Argument of* Carneades, *in one Branch of it, proves too much.* XI, XII. *Inconcluſive on another Account.* XIII. *Urged by the Author, with an additional Force,* XIV. *And anſwered.* XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII. *The Deſign of theſe hiſtorical Remarks; and, in general, concerning, the Meaſures of Submiſſion to Authority.*

I. I Mention *Carneades*, diſtinctly, in the laſt Place, as his Arguments relating to Morality, that great Branch of *Juſtice*, appeared, ſo very formidable to *Cicero*, that he

he declined to anſwer them. The general Character of this Philoſopher was, that in Reference to the Conduct of *moral* Life, he allowed Nothing but Probabilities; he believed there was, upon that Head of Inquiry, no Certainty, or Evidence, in any Thing *. And, therefore, after the Example of *Socrates*, and *Arceſilas*, his Buſineſs was rather to diſpute, than prove; to propoſe and conſider Difficulties, than to eſtabliſh, or aſcertain Truth, upon clear and diſtinct Grounds. When he was ſent on an Embaſſy to *Rome*, with *Critolaus* and *Diogenes*, to ſollicit the Mitigation of a Fine, impoſed upon the *Athenians*, the Reputation, and

* *Quæ quanquam non perciperentur, tamen quia viſum haberent quendam inſignem & illuſtrem, his ſapientis uſta regeretur.* Cic. de Nat. Deor.

Force,

Force of his Eloquence, was thought ſo dangerous, that *Cato*, the Cenſor, adviſed they ſhould be diſmiſſed, as coming rather, by Means of it, to extort, than, in Form of Supplicants, to ſollicit a Favour. The *Roman* Youth were moved to a Degree, by his Harangues, as if they had been ſeized with a Kind of Enthuſiaſm; which begot in them a ſudden, and violent Paſſion for Philoſophy. But his Diſputing, alternately, two Days, in publick, for, and againſt, Juſtice, did not, appear, altogether, ſuitable to the *Dignity* of the *Roman* Senate; or, indeed, to the Character of a ſolemn Embaſſy from *Athens*. This was too nice, and tender a Point, to be made a Trial of Wit before the moſt grave, and auguſt Aſſembly in the World. And there is

ſcarce

ſcarce a civilized Nation, any where, at this Time, which would not look upon it as ridiculous, either to act, or ſuffer, ſuch a Part as ſeems to have paſſed, upon that potent, and polite People, without any Cenſure.

II. But, I ſhall deſcend to conſider, in particular, the Force of that Argument of *Carneades*, againſt *Juſtice*, which *Cicero* thought ſo formidable, that he had not Courage to undertake the Examination of it: Though I humbly conceive, *Lactantius*, in ſaying the Heathens were incapable of anſwering it, had not thoroughly conſidered, what Solution might be given to it, upon clear and natural Principles.

" If there be ſuch a Thing as " Juſtice, it muſt be founded, ei- " ther, upon poſitive Right, or " natural

" natural Right. Now it *is not*
" founded upon poſitive Right;
" for that varies with Times and
" Places; different People apply-
" ing it to their own Profit, or
" Intereſts: Nor is it founded
" upon natural Right; which is
" no other than a Byaſs, Nature
" has impreſſed on all Animals,
" which leads to a Search after
" what is uſeful to them. And it
" cannot be regulated, according
" to this Byaſs, without commit-
" ting a thouſand Faults, and Vi-
" olences; from whence it fol-
" lows, that this natural Byaſs
" cannot be the Foundation of
" Juſtice: *Again*, it may be pro-
" ved, by a great many Examples,
" the Condition of Men is ſuch,
" that if they have a Mind to be
" juſt, they muſt act imprudent-
" ly, and fooliſhly. And if they
" have

" have a Mind to act prudently,
" they are unjuſt; from whence
" it is concluded, there is no ſuch
" Thing as Juſtice; for a Virtue,
" inſeparable from Folly, cannot
" be juſt.

III. This Objection ſeems to be propoſed, in a Light ſufficiently clear; and to be more artfully contrived, towards unſettling the the Notion of moral Juſtice, than any Argument that has been advanced upon the ſame View, by any of our modern ſceptical Wits. Let us ſee whether a good Anſwer may not be given to it, or if *Cicero* had ſo great Reaſon to fear it? who, in his Book of Laws, where he lays it down as a fundamental Principle, that there is an inherent Rectitude in certain Actions, abſtracting from all human, or poſitive Inſtitutions, parti-

particularly, begs Quarter from *Arceſilas* and *Carneades*, in Terms of Submiſſion, which ſhew, as if he, really, apprehended, theſe two Philoſophers, ſuperior to himſelf, in Force of Argument. "I am an undone Man, *ſaith* "*he*, how well ſoever my Meaſures "have been concerted, if I be at"tacked on that Side; I chuſe, "therefore, to beſpeak their Fa"vour, rather than to diſpute the "Ground with them*".

IV. And yet, there needs no other Anſwer, after all, to the Argument, of *Carneades* above recited, which is ſuppoſed by *Lactantius*, to have put *Cicero* in ſuch a Fright, but what a Perſon of much leſs Capacity, or

* *Placere cupio, ſubmovere non audeo. De Leg. L.* 1.

Pene-

Penetration, than *Cicero*, might eaſily have been capable of making.

V. He might have argued, that Juſtice is founded, *both* on poſitive, and natural Right; that there is no ſuch Inconſiſtency between theſe two Rights, as *Carneades* ſuppoſed; but they may fairly ſtand together; that it can be, therefore, no Argument of Violence, on one Hand, or of Imprudence, on the other, for a Man to conduct himſelf, according to the Rules of Juſtice, in both theſe Reſpects.

VI. For Proof of this, we need only obſerve a neceſſary Diſtinction, between the Rights of Nature, and the Law of Nature. A Right of Nature is, ſtrictly ſpeaking, no Law of Action to Man; but ſimply a *Permiſſion*; which

which he has from the Author of Nature, to act: The Law of Nature, on the other Side, which is Nothing but the Law of Reaſon, does not, always, confer a Right; becauſe it is reaſonable, in certain Caſes, in order to attain ſome greater Good, that a Man ſhould recede, even, from ſuch Rights, which Nature had otherwiſe permitted to him. The Right of Nature, therefore, in general, conſidered, is a Liberty of doing whatever is pleaſing, or agreeable, to our natural Appetites; for Appetites had been given us in vain, if not in order to be gratified, where the Gratification might really tend to our Good, or no particular Reaſon ſhould intervene, why they ought not to be gratified. We are, therefore, naturally permitted what-

ever we naturally desire; and it would import, indeed, little less than a Contradiction, to say, any Thing is naturally prohibited to us, towards which our Desires naturally carry us. But though Nature has not, and cannot, properly restrain her own Rights, yet they, being only Rights of *Sufferance*, not of *Obligation*; Reason may direct us upon good and wise Considerations, to restrain them, either by legal Compacts, or by a positive Act of our own Choice. Every Man, for Instance, in a State of Nature, has a natural Right to any Thing, upon which he can first lay his Hands; and some Remains of this Right still subsist in the best regulated Societies in the World; for no Man is any where under a legal Restraint from breathing

the common Air, or from taking up a common Stone in the High-way. But it being found neceſſary, when Men were formed into a regular Society, and towards attaining the Protection, and other beneficial Ends of it, which could not be attained in the natural State, that Property ſhould be ſecured; it became reaſonable, and conſequently agreeable to the Law of Nature, that what was, before, a common Right to all Men, ſhould be reſtrained to the more peculiar Uſe, and Benefit of particular Perſons.

VII. We readily, therefore, grant, that the Peace of Mankind, could not be well, or ſufficiently, provided for in a mere State of Nature; but we deny, that Juſtice cannot be regulated, according to the natural Byaſs, or Appetites, of

of Man, without committing a thouſand Faults, or Violences; for, even, ſetting aſide all human Compacts, Man, in whatever Condition of Life we place him, is to be conſidered as a reaſonable Agent; and, therefore, as regulating his Appetites, and Conduct, by the Law of Reaſon. Now, Reaſon will direct every Man, not to do to another, what in a ſuppoſed Change of Circumſtances, he would not have done to himſelf; it will, therefore, reſtrain him from doing any Injury to an innocent Perſon, or from attempting to deprive him of what he actually has in Poſſeſſion, merely to gratify his own cruel, or avaricious Temper. For even in the natural State, there are, certain fundamental, and immutable Rules of Juſtice, which ob-

blige Man every where, and at all Times. Such is that already named, with others, which ariſe from the common, and natural, Affection of Man, termed *Humanity*; concerning which, *Carneades*, himſelf, has left us a moſt excellent, and ſignal Teſtimony. " If, *ſaith he*, you, certainly, " knew, that an Aſp lay conceal- " ed in a Place, where another was " going to ſit down, by whoſe " Death you might propoſe to " your ſelf any extraordinary Ad- " vantage, you would commit " a high Act of Injuſtice, *if you* " did not give him Notice of the " Danger; though you might o-

* *Si ſcires*, inquit Carneades, *aſpidem occulte latere uſpiam & velle imprudentem aliquem ſuper eam aſſidere, cujus mors tibi emolumento futura ſit, improbe faceris, niſi monueris ne aſſideat; ſed improbe tamen id te conſtaret feciſſe: Quis enim coarguere poſſit?*

" mit

" mit to do it with Impunity, or " any Apprehenſion of being cal- " led to Account.

VIII. The great Force of the Objection ſeems to lie againſt the Notion of Juſtice, as founded in *poſitive Right*; becauſe "it is very "often fooliſh, and imprudent, to "act, as poſitive Laws direct; and "the Ideas of Folly, and Injuſtice, "are incompatible, in the ſame "Subject.

IX. This Part of the Objection proceeds upon a Suppoſition, that the Reſtraints which are laid upon Men, or which they voluntarily agree ſhould be laid upon them, in Society, are Arguments of Folly, and Imprudence, becauſe contrary to their natural Rights. Now if this Argument proves any Thing, it proves there ought to be no Government;

and, therefore, no regular Society in the World; becauſe it *is* impoſſible to form any Scheme of Government, or legal Conſtitution, wherein Men ſhall not be obliged to depart from their natural Rights, in ſeveral Reſpects. But, ſetting this Conſequence aſide, where is the Folly, and Imprudence, in giving up a precarious, vagrant, and indefinite Right, in Conſideration of a fixed, and ſtanding, Property? Can any Thing be more agreeable to the ſtanding Maxims, whereby *all* wiſe Men have, ever, *governed* themſelves, than, upon the Competition, to poſtpone a leſs, to a far greater Advantage? But this Queſtion, indeed, may be determined by a Caſe incident to Man, even his natural State. Nature has not given to Man any Right more

more clear and indiſputable, than that to the Uſe of his bodily Members; in particular, of his Hand. But in Caſe of a Mortification, or Gangrene, which would require that his Hand ſhould be cut off, in order to preſerve other Parts of his Body; Reaſon will, notwithſtanding, direct that he ought to ſuffer the Amputation. Yet, according to *Carneades*, he would act fooliſhly, and imprudently, ſhould he ſubmit to it, as conſenting, hereby, to an Action, evidently repugnant to *natural Right*.

X. The Caſe is the ſame, if applied to the body Politick. A Man, who would entitle himſelf to the Benefits of it, and enjoy that Security from Violence, and Oppreſſion, which is only to be found in it; ought, in Reaſon, to

part with ſeveral Rights, and Conveniencies, to which, otherwiſe, he might have layed Claim, yet not without much Hazard, and in continual Fear of his Life. It is, in this Caſe, not an Act of Folly, and Imprudence, but of Wiſdom, in Man, to reſign his Pretenſions to certain former independent Rights of Nature, into the Hands of the civil Magiſtrate, that he may be admitted to ſhare in the much greater Privileges of a regular and legal Government.

XI. I have omitted *Nothing*, that may deſerve to be conſidered in this Objection, except, perhaps, where it is ſaid, "Poſitive "Right cannot be the Foundation of Juſtice, becauſe that "varies with Times and Places; "different People applying it to "their

" their own Profit, or Intereſts".

XII. To which it may be ſaid, the general Rule, or Reaſon of Juſtice, is, notwithſtanding, ſtill the ſame; and the Difference, which ariſes, in different Places, from the different Application of it, only reſpects ſuch human Sanctions as are made concerning Things, in their own Nature wholly arbitrary; thus one Order of Men, may be appointed, by poſitive Law, to wear ſuch a particular Habit, wherein, by the ſame Authority, it may be criminal for other Perſons to appear; as in a thouſand like Inſtances, where Nothing is enjoyned contrary to natural Equity; but no Law can render it juſt for a Man to hate, to defame, or to deſtroy, an innocent Perſon. In the former Reſpect, though we grant the

Subject

Subject Matter of moral Juſtice changes, as to Times, and Perſons; yet the Aſſertion, in general, that poſitive Right varies with Times and Places, is, notwithſtanding, at the beſt inconcluſive, and equivocal; as ſuppoſing, poſitive Right, only in a *partial*, and reſtrained, Senſe, and excluding it in that Senſe, which is properly the Subject of the Queſtion.

XIII. I have endeavoured to anſwer whatever I apprehended material, in this irrefragable Objection, as it appeared to *Cicero*. But, there is ſo little Reaſon, for apprehending any Danger to the Cauſe of Morality, from it; that I ſhall proceed to give it ſtill greater Force, by a Conceſſion, which the Generality of the Terms, wherein it is expreſſed, doth not oblige me to make.

Carne-

Carneades ſuppoſes, if his Argument imports any Thing, that all poſitive Laws, contrary to the Rights of Nature, are unjuſt; this crude, and general Aſſertion, is eaſily confuted, from the many Benefits Men reap from Society, and which are more than equivalent to the natural Rights, from which they depart, for the Sake of them. But, I will now admit, that it is poſſible, certain Caſes may happen, wherein Men may be expoſed to greater Evils; the Loſs, for Inſtance, of Life, or Liberty for many Years, under cruel, and barbarous Uſage, greater Evils, than any Advantages of Society can well be ſuppoſed to ballance. In this Caſe, it may ſeem contrary to the Rules of Prudence, and conſequently of ſtrict Juſtice, that a Man ſhould

owe

owe any Duties to Society, or poſitive Laws, which will render him more miſerable, than if he had never been a Member of Society.

XIV. I ſhall endeavour to comprize my Anſwer, to this Difficulty, having mentioned it on another Occaſion, in few Words. If Society be only of human Ordinance, I do not ſee, how any Man can be obliged, for the Sake of it, to ſuffer, or expoſe himſelf to ſuffer greater Inconveniencies, than the Benefits, he can propoſe to reap from Society, will compenſate. Becauſe Government being, upon this Scheme, founded, upon popular Conſent, no Man can reaſonably be preſumed, to have conſented to the Laws of it, on that Condition. But if Government be the ſpecial Or-

dinance

linance of God, and it is neceſ-ary, to the Ends of it, that Men hould expoſe themſelves to Suf-erings of this Kind, in Diſcharge of their Duty to it, this is a ſo-lid, and clear Anſwer to all Ob-iections which may ariſe, whe-ther in reſpect to Prudence, or Juſtice. As God has a Right to command our Obedience, in the moſt difficult Inſtances of it; ſo he can, and will make up all In-conveniences, in Purſuance of his own Inſtitution; and if they are not ſupplied in this Life, it is a convincing, and clear Argument, that there is another Life, where-in they ſhall be ſupplied.

XV. I have had no Deſign, in theſe tranſient Remarks, on ſe-veral of the moſt eminent Phi-loſophers, but to ſhew, how, with all their Excellencies, they had

had their Defects and Errors; and that without detracting from the Praiſes, which in all Ages, ſince they flouriſhed, have been thought due to them, we ought ſo to conſult them, as to make uſe of our own Reaſon, or any additional Lghts, which the Improvements made by ſucceeding Ages, may have afforded to us.

XVI. But how then, in this our Enquiry, concerning the Authority of Philoſophers, in reference to the Subject of moral Virtue, ſhall we come to any determinate Reſolution? Seeing *none of* them was free from Error, and many of them were ſubject to groſs Errors. If we ſay, ſuch wiſe Men did not always reaſon juſtly, it may be asked, how we come to be more enlightened, or how we, certainly know, that

we

we are more enlightened. In order to prove that any Perſon did not reaſon juſtly, there muſt be ſome certain Teſt, or Standard of reaſoning juſtly, with which if his Arguments do not agree, what he ſaith can be of no Authority.

XVII. But does not, then, a greater Difficulty, here occur; and which entangles us in a Circle? The Authority of Philoſophers, ſaith the Reader, is propoſed to me as a Guide; and now I am to judge, whether my Guide conduct me in the right Way: Is not this to change Hands, and to invert the natural Order of Things? I am no longer to follow; my Office at preſent is, to inform, and correct my Guide.

There is no Remedy, but in the following Diſtinction, between an

an abſolute, and a conditional Obedience to my Guide. Out of the Confidence I have in his Skill, or Honeſty, I will follow where I do not know, or cannot ſee my Way; but where I have ſome imperfect Knowledge of it, or have Cauſe violently to ſuſpect, that he is going to miſlead me; I will rather endeavour to find out the Way my ſelf, than to follow him into a Quagmire; or, perhaps, down a ſteep and dangerous Precipice, with my Eyes open.

XVIII. The Application is obvious, we ought not to *judge* of what is reaſonable by Authority, but to examine Authority by Reaſon. Yet, where our own Reaſon does not afford ſufficient Light; in that Caſe, but in *that Caſe* only, Prudence may, ſometimes, direct

direct us, to be determined by Authority; *and*, eſpecially, if we are under Circumſtances, as we, ſometimes, are, that oblige us immediately to act.

The Conclusion.

That no juſt Inference can be drawn, againſt the Expediency of a divine Revelation, from any Thing that hath been ſaid, concerning the Light of natural Reaſon.

THERE is one Objection, which I have had continually in View, throughout this Treatiſe, the Force whereof, it may be here, in the Concluſion of it, very proper for me to conſider. It is queſtioned, if the Principles

of Morality are really deducible from the Light, and Evidence of natural Reaſon: What Neceſſity could there be, that an infinitely wiſe God, whoſe Action always bears the Character of *his* Attributes, and who does Nothing ſuperfluous or in vain, ſhould confirm thoſe Principles to us by an expreſs Revelation? The natural Proofs concerning thoſe Principles, which we might, at any Time, conſult, being at Hand, what Need was there of any farther Witneſs; or of a Teſtimony altogether ſupernatural?

Without Inquiring at preſent, whether a divine Revelation concerning the Duties of moral Life, was abſolutely neceſſary to Mankind; we ſhall ſufficiently obviate this Pretence, by ſaying, there may be great Occaſion for the

Uſe

Uſe of certain Means, in order to attain an End, which yet might, *poſſibly*, have been attained without them. There are ſome Men, who, by the Advantage of an extraordinary Capacity, may make a conſiderable Progreſs in ſeveral Sciences, without the Inſtruction of any Maſter. But no Man will be ſo weak as to argue, that ſuch Books which teach the Rudiments of thoſe Sciences, which methodize and explain them, *are*, therefore, *ſuperfluous and in vain*: It is ſtill more irrational to argue againſt a ſtanding Digeſt of Laws, confirmed by a divine Authority, that Men, by the Uſe of their natural Powers, might at length have diſcovered the Reaſons, and obligatory Force of thoſe Laws. For the ſame Argument which proves, that ſome Perſons would,

poſſibly, have made ſuch a Diſcovery, will evidently prove, that the much greater Part of Mankind, would, very probably, not have made ſuch Diſcovery. And what if God, willing to ſhew his abundant Love and Compaſſion, towards more weak and illiterate Perſons, leſs capable of deducing, on all Occaſions, the Rules of their Duty, by a Train of juſt Conſequences, hath been pleaſed to lay down thoſe Rules in ſo many clear, ſimple, and diſtinct Propoſitions? Or, (ſince the Duties of *Morality* are *not, in all* the Inſtances of them, equally evident and demonſtrable) what if God, in Favour to more knowing, and inquiſitive, but ſtill fallible, Men, hath referred them to a *Law*, and to a *Teſtimony*, from which there lies no Appeal; and

and in following the Directions whereof they cannot err? We have obſerved the great Defects of moral Philoſophy, where, from the Character of thoſe who taught and profeſſed it, we might have expected much higher Improvements; but if any one of the Philoſophers had really been capable of compiling a perfect Syſtem of the moral Law, this could have been no Reaſon ſtill, why the reſt of Mankind ſhould, implicitly, have aſſented to the Doctrines he taught, or without a particular, and diſtinct Examination of them. For admitting he had not actually erred, yet the very Suppoſition of his being fallible, or ſubject to Error, would have required that Nothing he advanced ſhould be abſolutely believed upon his bare Affirmation.

Whereas, ſhould God interpoſe by any ſpecial Notification, to aſcertain the Rules of moral Life, his Authority would admit no Diſpute. A Doctrine, plainly revealed from Heaven, needs no other Proof. It is a ſufficient Reaſon for our aſſenting to ſuch Doctrine, that we ſee no Reaſon againſt it, though we may not, perhaps, be able to diſcover, in a clear, and diſtinct View, all the Reaſons for it.

By endeavouring, therefore, to eſtabliſh natural Religion on its proper Grounds, I am *far from* having any Deſign, to queſtion the Expediency of a divine Revelation; without conſidering at preſent, whether ſuch a Revelation hath been actually made, the Reaſons already mentioned, with many other that might be mentioned,

tioned, for a ſtanding deciſive Authority, to aſcertain a Rule of Life to Mankind, are ſo evident and ſtrong, that the *Deiſt* muſt confeſs, at leaſt, it is very deſirable, very agreeable to the Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of the divine Legiſlator, that he ſhould interpoſe, for the common Benefit, and Inſtruction of Mankind, after ſuch a Manner; whether he hath, hitherto, actually interpoſed to that End, or not?

The Expediency of divine Revelation, in reſpect to a ſtanding Rule of moral Life, is the only Thing I am now obliged to conſider; it is not here incumbent on me, to prove that ſuch a Revelation hath been actually made. This hath been done ſo often, and ſo inconteſtably, by Chriſtian Writers, ancient and modern,

not to mention the *Jewiſh*; that one cannot without Aſtoniſhment, obſerve the preſent Effrontery, and incorrigible Temper of Unbelievers; if after all, they who more openly, in their Writings, eſpouſe the Cauſe of *Deiſm*, and would be thought the chief Oracles of it, are really Unbelievers: Or, if it may not rather be ſuſpected, they only affect to be thought ſo, from a Spirit of Vanity and Oppoſition, or to the End, they may have an Opportunity of ſaying very bold and extravagant Things, with ſome pompous Appearances of Learning: Tho' the moſt elaborate * Performance in that Way, which hath been lately handed about with much Induſtry, and Oſtentation, contains Nothing, but what any

* A Diſcourſe of the Grounds and Reaſons of the Chriſtian Religion.

Perſon

Perſon of ordinary Capacity, might eaſily, in a ſhort Time, have been able to collect, provided the common Languages had been known to him, or the mechanical Rules, to be practiſed, in a good Library, of becoming learned without Reading or Reflection.

But this is not a proper Place for animadverting upon the pernicious Deſign of the Book, to which I have referred; the Author of it may, in convenient Time, receive, from a proper Hand, the Treatment he hath deſerved, for the Service done by him to the Cauſe of Infidelity: It appears, in the mean Time, of ſufficient Force, to obviate any ill Conſequences, that may be drawn from what he hath ſaid, in Prejudice to the Truth of divine Revelation, that in his Way of

of arguing, ſhould God be really ſuppoſed to make a Revelation of his Will to Mankind, it would be impoſſible for Men to produce any certain Proof, that ſuch a Revelation has been actually made; and, conſequently, God could have no End worthy of his Wiſdom, and Goodneſs in making it. For in Order to prove the Truth of any Revelation, except God ſhould reveal his Will, by immediate Inſpiration, to every particular Perſon, there appears to be no other Method, but either by the Interpoſition of a miraculous Power to confirm the Doctrine revealed, or by a Prediction of future, and diſtant Events, that have no Manner of viſible Connection, with the Order of Cauſes, at the Time of divulging it. But in this Author's

Method

Method of reaſoning, if we purſue it in its natural and direct Conſequences, no Argument could be drawn from either of theſe Proofs, to confirm the Truth, I do not ſay of the *Jewiſh*, or *Chriſtian*, but of any ſuppoſed Revelation whatever; ſince no Revelation can be conceived, where the Evidences of it, in both theſe Reſpects, will appear more ſtrong, than thoſe, upon which the Truth of the *Moſaick*, and *Chriſtian* Faith is founded; ſo that, whereas, other Unbelievers have argued, in general, againſt the Reaſonableneſs, and Expediency of divine Revelations; this Writer has, in Effect, denied the very Poſſibility of the Thing. For it is abſolutely impoſſible, that a wiſe and good God ſhould do, what he could

have no wiſe, or good End in doing; or, which is the ſame Thing, that he ſhould reveal his Will to Mankind, and at the ſame Time, leave them without any certain, or ſufficient Proof, that he hath revealed it. Now I aver it again, if the Proofs of the Chriſtian Revelation, in particular, are not certain, and ſufficient to this End, it is impoſſible, without a continued Series of Miracles, in every Age (which no *Deiſt* will be ſo weak, as to ſuppoſe neceſſary) that ſtronger Proofs ſhould be produced *for any* Revelation.

But without deſcending to examine, particularly, the Grounds, upon which the Truth of our holy Faith is eſtabliſhed, I ſhall only take the Liberty to obſerve, concerning the Advantages of a ſtand-

ſtanding Revelation in general, that, though Morality, in the Reaſon, and Foundation of it, hath, in all Ages, been the ſame, and ever will continue the ſame; though there are ſome Truths, which the moſt barbarous, and illiterate Nations ſee, and of which, perhaps, they feel the Force, as well as the moſt knowing, and polite; though the Heathens, in general, who have not *the Law*, any written, or revealed Law, are a Law unto themſelves, their *own Conſciences accuſing, or elſe excuſing them*; yet a ſure *Word of Prophecy*, which ſhould preſcribe to Mankind the exact Meaſures of their Duty, would certainly appear very deſirable to them; both towards preventing thoſe Errors, to which the wiſeſt of Men have been ſubject,

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